Smart Choices

for developing our community

A Catalogue of Ideas...
to invite community
discussion and comments

Edmonton
June 2003

SmartChoices
for developing our community

The Smart Choices Catalogue of Ideas was consolidated by the City of Edmonton Planning and Development Department, with chapters written by independent consultants.

For further information, please view the Smart Choices web site at

http://www.edmonton.ca/smartchoices

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PROLOGUE

Smart Choices Catalogue of Ideas presents nine ideas, prepared by four Edmonton consulting firms, for accommodating future growth and redevelopment in Edmonton, while sustaining the quality of life Edmontonians enjoy.

Citizens are invited to comment on the nine smart choice ideas, using the questionnaire included with the Catalogue.

The Catalogue has been organized in the following manner:

- The Overview provides background, smart choice fundamentals and smart choice principles.
- The Context, prepared by the Planning and Development Department, outlines the impacts of growth, aging of infrastructure and buildings and external influences on Edmonton's future.
- The Smart Choice Ideas present nine ideas, prepared by four Edmonton consulting firms, for accommodating future growth and redevelopment in Edmonton while sustaining the quality of life Edmontonians enjoy.
- The City of Edmonton Projects and Initiatives identify four smart choice areas the City is presently working on.

Citizen comments on the nine smart choice ideas will be consolidated and forwarded to City Council to contribute to their deliberations as they debate the option of implementing these smart choice ideas.

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OVERVIEW

BACKGROUND

Smart Choices for Developing Our Community *evolved from City Council's direction to prepare a "strategy for the intensification of land development" and comprises phase two of the intensification strategy project. Consultation with citizens for the preparation of* Edmonton's Intensification Audit *in phase one indicated that there is a large community interest in making smart choices about the future of Edmonton to help us sustain the quality of life we enjoy.*

In response to that interest, the Smart Choices Participation Committee, comprised of representatives of community organizations and City departments and agencies, worked to develop a set of smart choice fundamentals and principles for making Edmonton a good place to live. The committee used the smart choice principles as the basis for identifying ideas/scenarios that represent smart choices for developing our community. Forty-five ideas were submitted and consolidated into thirteen distinct suggestions. Two workshops were conducted with the committee to examine the ideas, assess their validity as smart choices in the Edmonton context, and rate them based on their suitability for detailed analysis and presentation in a smart choices showcase and catalogue of ideas. The workshop participants then added eight new ideas to the original set. The ideas generated by the committee are outlined in Appendix Two.

Based on the work of the committee, nine ideas were selected for further examination and presentation in the Smart Choices Showcase and Catalogue of Ideas. Four consultant firms, EDA Collaborative Inc., IBI Group, The Dagny Partnership, and Urban Revision Land Development and Management were selected to interpret, describe and elaborate on the nine ideas from their perspective for presentation in the Smart Choices Showcase and Catalogue of Ideas. This catalogue presents the nine ideas as developed by the four consulting firms.

Several City departments are working on forward thinking initiatives, and the appendix presents an overview of four smart choice areas the City is presently working on.

FUNDAMENTALS

The Smart Choices Participation Committee, comprised of representatives of community organizations and City departments and agencies, worked to develop four smart choice fundamentals. The fundamentals identify what it takes to create a good place to live and have been identified to set a framework for making future decisions about growth and development in Edmonton.

Options
Viability
SmartChoices
for developing our community
Vitality
Access

Options	Edmonton's citizens should be able to make a variety of choices regarding location, housing, work and transportation. The City and private sector work to provide options by offering different neighbourhood types, housing types, business and work locations, and transportation modes.
Access	Edmonton's citizens should have access to a variety of amenities and destinations. The need for access influences individual decisions about locating near places of work and learning, community facilities and services, recreation and entertainment, health and emergency services, open space and natural areas and shopping.
Vitality	Edmonton should be a vibrant city, interesting to live in, and attractive for business. Vitality requires a mix of activities and uses, community interaction, heritage, culture and beauty, diversity, interest and excitement, active democracy, and strong downtown and commercial areas.
Viability	Edmonton should be a viable city, with valuable assets and a continuing infusion of community and business support. Viability requires efficient use of resources, an adequate revenue base, economic growth, investment and reinvestment, affordable infrastructure and services, social cohesion and shared goals.

PRINCIPLES

The Committee also worked to develop smart choice principles. The principles contribute to building a framework for making future decisions about growth and development in Edmonton.

Edmonton's future smart choice decisions should:

1. Apply to actions within the municipal mandate or sphere of influence;
2. Apply to all forms of urban land use - commercial, industrial, residential, institutional, recreational;
3. Involve intensification of land use and / or activity;
4. Protect the positive character, attributes and value of existing neighbourhoods while facilitating sensitive infill, using a consultative process;
5. Optimize cost-effectiveness, including the use of surplus capacities, of municipal and private infrastructure, service delivery and community assets;
6. Provide for a range of choices in living and working environments in the city, to reflect social, demographic and economic change;
7. Encourage utilization of and investment in older commercial and industrial areas;
8. Provide for open space and natural areas including the continued preservation of the river valley, for the enjoyment of citizens;
9. Encourage public and private actions that promote intensification through City initiatives;
10. Enhance the role of the downtown as the premier economic, social and cultural centre of the Edmonton region and the government centre of Alberta; and
11. Support a variety of safe, effective and viable transportation options for the movement of people and goods.

CONTEXT•LOOKING TO OUR FUTURE

In the future, the quality of life that Edmonton residents enjoy will be impacted on several fronts – by population and economic growth, by aging of real estate and infrastructure and by external influences. The Smart Choices Ideas that are presented in this catalogue could provide practical, proactive approaches for managing change, addressing challenges, and maximizing opportunities.

The following sections highlight the impacts of:

GROWTH

Edmonton is a rapidly growing city with a forecasted period of strong growth. Growth creates intensification pressure in Edmonton's mature areas, and pressure for new and upgraded infrastructure and facilities throughout the city.

AGE

By 2025 a significant area of the city will contain homes, business and institutional buildings, neighbourhoods, roads, sidewalks and underground utilities that will be over 50 years old. As buildings near and exceed 50 years of age, they will experience redevelopment, replacement, reuse and renovation pressure. At the same time, a large amount of City infrastructure, including roads, sidewalks, and sewer lines, will need to be replaced, upgraded, or repaired.

OTHER INFLUENCES ON EDMONTON'S FUTURE

By 2025, Edmonton's City Council will have made substantive decisions on our city's future growth and land use. Local and regional growth, provincial and federal actions and policy, and evolving community desires will influence those decisions.

THE CITY IS GROWING

Like many major North American cities, Edmonton is growing at a rapid pace. New infrastructure must be built and maintained; additional demands are put on existing infrastructure; more services need to be provided; and, where growth is accommodated at the edges of the city, car dependency increases, as does traffic congestion and air pollution. Although the problems associated with growth are not yet as serious as those of some of Canada's other large cities, the choices we make now will affect the quality of life of Edmontonians for years to come.

TODAY IN EDMONTON

Population

Edmonton's current population is estimated to be 687,000. Since 1999, the population has grown by approximately 39,000 people. Over the last 10 years the population has increased by nearly 60,000. Edmonton's area is 700 square kilometres and has remained this size since 1982.

Building Permits/Housing Starts

The value of building permits is an indicator of the performance of Edmonton's economy. In 2002, the total value of building permits exceeded $1 billion which is the highest since 1981 and the second highest in Edmonton's history. Residential single family construction in Edmonton's new neighbourhoods absorbs a high percentage of Edmonton's total permit values and is projected to account for 60-70% of new housing over the next five years.

Housing starts are an indication of consumer confidence in Edmonton's economy. When people are confident enough in their jobs to buy a new home it bodes well for the economy. The 8,821 housing starts in 2002 are the highest since 1982 (Figure 1). As expected, when housing starts increase so do the number of homes that require servicing by the City. When development is at as fast a pace as it is now, the City runs the risk of outpacing its ability to finance necessary infrastructure in suburban areas. For instance, neighbourhoods are developed many years in advance of assembly of park space or the provision of transit.

Economic Growth

Despite the North American slowdown, real economic activity in the Edmonton region is estimated to remain strong, partially due to the economic spin-off from investment in northern Alberta. Since 2000, Edmonton's (Census Metropolitan Area) economic growth rate has averaged 3.8% per year and is estimated to remain between 3% and 4% through 2008. Strong growth in housing and consumer spending, growing employment, and positive net migration contribute to the strong performance of the economy in Edmonton and the region. A thriving economy contributes to development in new residential and business areas and an increase in infrastructure demands.

Infrastructure

The City provides, manages and maintains an infrastructure inventory that includes assets such as sewers, roads, parks, buildings, LRT and transit facilities, traffic signals, recreation facilities, affordable housing and library facilities. As Edmonton grows, additional pressure is placed on this infrastructure. The 2003 - 2012 Long Range Financial Plan identifies a capital plan of $2.71 billion over the next 10 years to accommodate planned growth. Another $2.94 is identified to support the preservation and rehabilitation of existing infrastructure. Currently, $3.2 billion of the capital plan has no dedicated funding.

The result of the funding gap is that the City is often not meeting expectations for new infrastructure and/or the provision and replacement of infrastructure in mature areas of the city. In new neighbourhoods, although the City and other public agencies provide some services and infrastructure immediately, the longer term demands for schools and transit are not being met.

Figure 1: City of Edmonton Housing Starts
Source: CMHC, December 2002

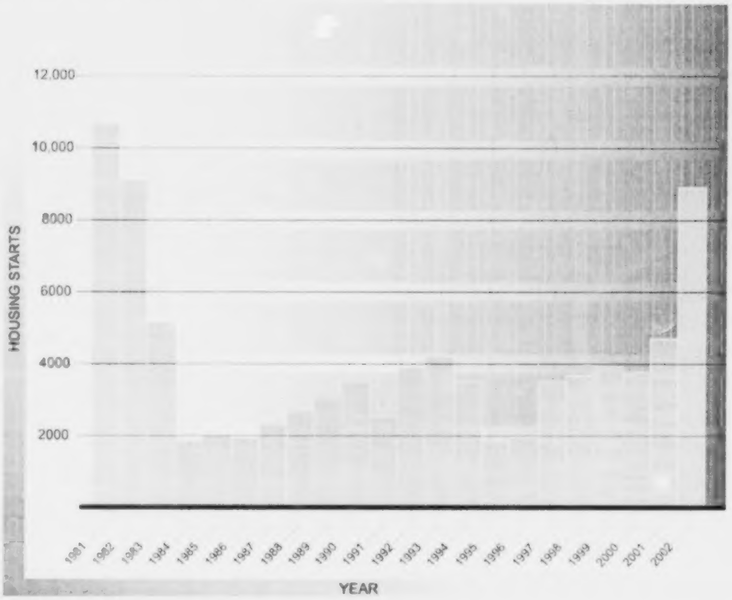
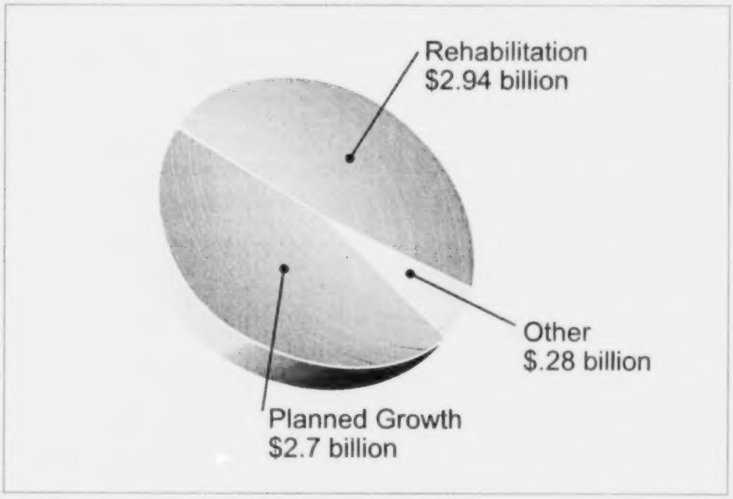


Figure 2: 2003 - 2012 Total Capital Plan - Funded and Unfunded Projects



Commuting

The average trip time from home to work in Edmonton is approximately 24 minutes for those who drive to work. This compares to approximately 41 minutes for home to work transit trips. A growing proportion, 27%, of the major road network in Edmonton experiences traffic congestion at peak times. Transit passengers also encounter congestion in peak times, with 16% of LRT vehicles and 60% of buses experiencing high loads in the weekday hours.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2025

Population and Demographic Projections

In the next year, Edmonton's population is expected to grow by 10,000 and in the next 5 years by nearly 50,000. If the city continues to grow at its current pace there will be over 140,000 more people within Edmonton's borders in 2025 than there are today. With this type of growth projected, it is important that decisions are made to ensure the best possible quality of life for Edmontonians.

Although Edmonton is still one of the youngest cities in Canada, our population is getting older. The 55-74 age cohort will grow consistently over the next 25 years. The size and age of this cohort has a significant impact on housing markets and transportation options. As more and more people enter their senior years, many are expected to leave the single family housing market and move into condominiums, rental units, retirement homes and other types of housing. A segment of this group seems to be making housing choices based on proximity to services, amenities and transportation alternatives. This group will benefit from or be attracted to transit oriented or mixed use developments, and alternative housing options.

Although not as large as the 55-74 group, the 25-34 age cohort remains strong through 2025. Members of this generation are forming households and starting families at a much later age, living instead with roommates or remaining home longer with their parents. This group could be competing for the same housing options, locations and transportation alternatives as the 55-74 age group over the next 20 years. Figure 3 shows the City of Edmonton population change from 2000 to 2025.

Developers are responding by proposing redevelopment in older neighbourhoods with access to existing mixed uses and alternative transportation options. Builders are responding to the changing needs of homebuyers by offering a greater variety of housing styles, and incorporating certain flexibilities into the design of housing so that it evolves with the changing lifestyles of its occupants.

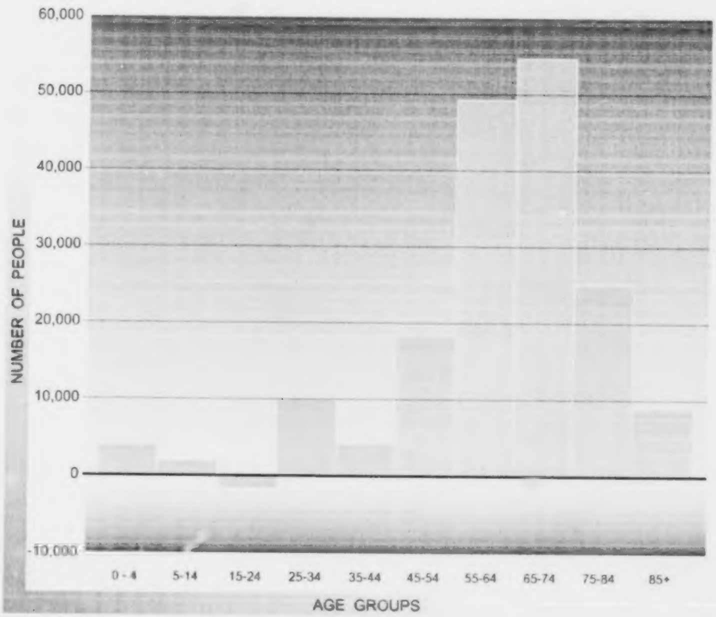


Figure 3: City of Edmonton Population Change: 2000-2025

Source: Edmonton Population and Employment Forecast Allocation Study 2000 - 2025

Accommodating Growth in 2025

A quickly growing city impacts its older and newer areas. Growth in the form of intensification, reinvestment, and redevelopment will impact older neighbourhoods while new areas will experience expansion pressure. As Edmonton continues to grow, the City's ability to support growth and economic development, and to maintain existing service levels, will be tested. Map 1 identifies projected growth and redevelopment areas in 2025.

Residential Redevelopment / Reinvestment Growth Areas

By 2025, most neighbourhoods built before 1990 (older than 35 years in 2025) will be experiencing intensification, reinvestment, and redevelopment pressure.

Stable Neighbourhoods

Neighbourhoods developed between 1990-2025 will have experienced the most significant amount of recent investment.

Developing Neighbourhoods

These areas are currently approved for growth and will be experiencing development activity in 2025.

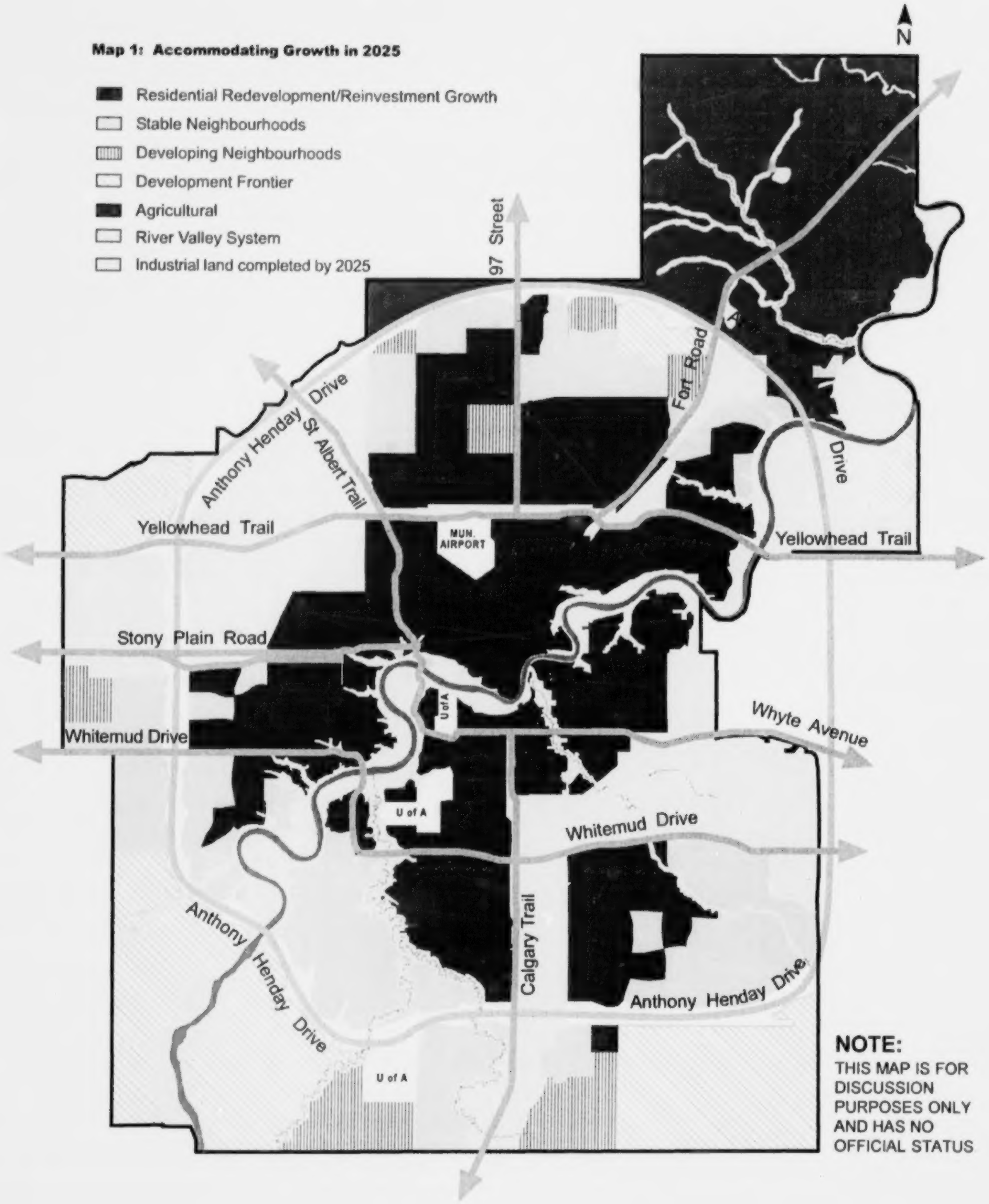
Development Frontier

The development frontier in Edmonton is the area where development is most likely to occur beyond 2025 and is not currently approved for urban growth. The remaining suburban lands designated in *Plan Edmonton* are the most likely to be developed beyond 2025. Construction of the ring road and future economic conditions will dictate development beyond 2025.

Industrial Areas

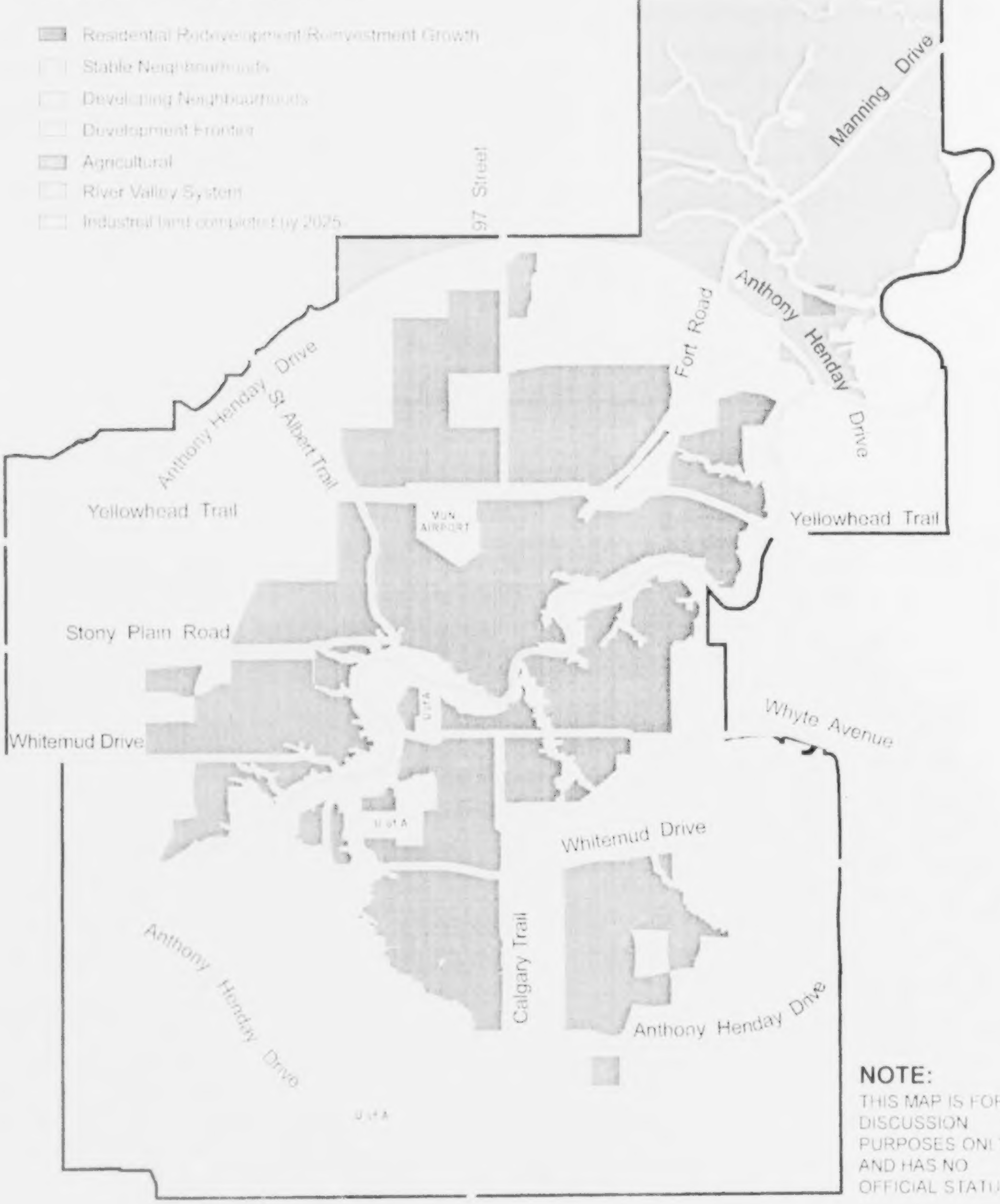
Most of the land designated as industrial in *Plan Edmonton* will be consumed by 2025, assuming that demand to 2025 continues at the same rate as forecast to 2010. If this is the case, there will be pressure to designate more land for industrial uses, conflicting with residential development pressure.

Map 1: Accommodating Growth in 2025


Residential Redevelopment/Reinvestment Growth
Stable Neighbourhoods
Developing Neighbourhoods
Development Frontier
Agricultural
River Valley System
Industrial land completed by 2025
N
97 Street
Fort Road
Drive
Anthony Henday Drive
St Albert Trail
Yellowhead Trail
MUN. AIRPORT
Yellowhead Trail
Stony Plain Road
U of A
Whyte Avenue
Whitemud Drive
U of A
Whitemud Drive
Anthony Henday Drive
Calgary Trail
Anthony Henday Drive
U of A

NOTE:
THIS MAP IS FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY AND HAS NO OFFICIAL STATUS

Map 1: Accommodating Growth in 2025


▨ Residential Redevelopment/Reinvestment Growth
☐ Stable Neighbourhoods
☐ Developing Neighbourhoods
☐ Development Frontier
▨ Agricultural
☐ River Valley System
☐ Industrial land completed by 2025
Manning Drive
97 Street
Anthony Henday Drive
Fort Road
St. Albert Trail
Yellowhead Trail
MUN AIRPORT
Yellowhead Trail
Stony Plain Road
Whyte Avenue
Whitemud Drive
U of A
Whitemud Drive
Calgary Trail
Anthony Henday Drive
Anthony Henday Drive
U of A

NOTE:
THIS MAP IS FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY AND HAS NO OFFICIAL STATUS

THE CITY IS AGING

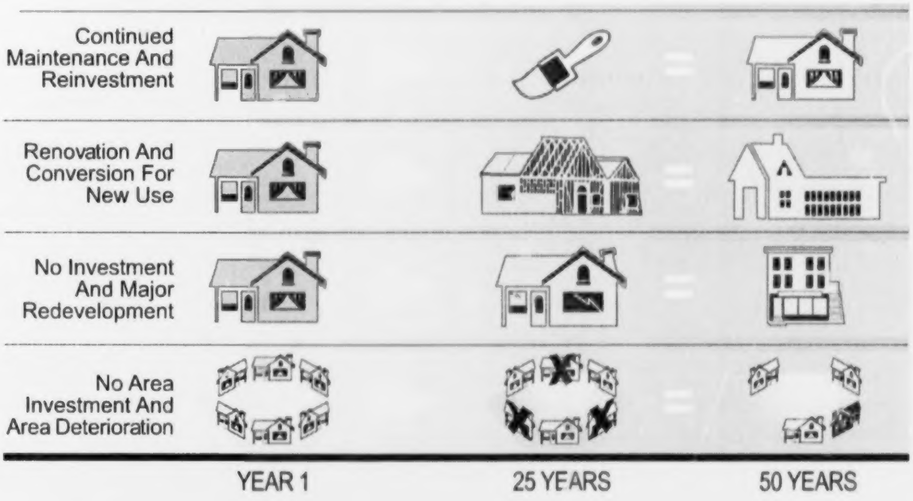
Although Edmonton is a young city, the centre of Edmonton is growing older, and the aging of neighbourhoods, business areas, and public infrastructure and facilities presents challenges and opportunities. With the decline of the physical condition of real estate and infrastructure, come choices for government, developers, and the public about maintenance, renovation, reuse, and redevelopment. The decisions that are made affect whether an area deteriorates with age, remains a vibrant and desirable area, or is transformed altogether to suit changing needs and market conditions.

THE AGING PROCESS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR EDMONTON

In the first 25 years of the life of a neighbourhood, homes, public and privately-owned facilities, and commercial buildings require little more than basic maintenance. As neighbourhoods age, and as properties are bought and sold, renovations take place to meet changing market conditions, and the changing needs and desires of new home or business owners. Age may also mean that some buildings no longer function effectively to serve the uses they were originally designed for. These buildings may be renovated to suit new uses or the properties redeveloped altogether. As buildings get closer to 50 years old, those that have had little reinvestment over the years are likely to deteriorate. Where the location and the surrounding environment remains desirable, these properties may come under pressure for redevelopment. If an area as a whole has had little reinvestment over the years, the area may deteriorate and private market conditions will not support redevelopment. Figure 4 depicts the aging and real estate reinvestment alternatives.

Figure 4:

Aging of Residential Real Estate and the Reinvestment Process


Continued Maintenance And Reinvestment
Renovation And Conversion For New Use
No Investment And Major Redevelopment
No Area Investment And Area Deterioration
YEAR 1
25 YEARS
50 YEARS

Redevelopment of Residential Areas

Edmonton currently has 29 neighbourhoods that are 50 years of age or older. Most of these neighbourhoods surround the downtown and are both north and south of the North Saskatchewan River. They include areas such as Boyle Street McCauley, Queen Mary Park and Strathcona.

The aging of Edmonton's neighbourhoods and the related reinvestment activity is currently showing in a number of ways. In 2002, 95 single-family houses were demolished in neighbourhoods 50 years and older, but almost 1750 units were built (primarily multiple family). Many of these new units are part of higher density residential redevelopment projects in areas including the High Street area of Westmount and Cloverdale.

Single family homeowners in neighbourhoods 50 years and older are also investing significant amounts in maintaining and updating their homes, and in some cases replacing an older home with a larger new home. In 2002, these homeowners invested almost $7 million in their properties, and another $6.5 million was spent building new single family homes on existing lots.

Total residential construction activity in 2002 in neighbourhoods 50 years and older reached a value of $154 million, or 21% of Edmonton's total 2002 investment in housing.

Transformation of Industrial, Commercial, and Institutional Uses

Major transformations of industrial areas have occurred in Oliver and Downtown, where Edmonton's original rail yard has been developed into a mixed use residential, shopping and business area; and Riverdale, where a brickyard was developed into a residential area. The Greisbach military base and the Fort Road Old Town, are also planned for large-scale residential and commercial redevelopment projects.

Downtown Reinvestment

Reinvestment in aging real estate in the downtown is occurring with major interior and exterior renovations taking place to update Edmonton City Centre, and the renovation and reuse of commercial and warehouse buildings for loft-style housing.

City of Edmonton

Railtown development, Downtown Edmonton

City of Edmonton

Phillips Lofts, Downtown Edmonton

Infrastructure and Public Facilities

An aging and reinvestment process, similar to the aging cycle of private real estate, is experienced with City facilities and infrastructure. Maintenance, reinvestment and replacement demands have increased over time as the physical condition of infrastructure such as roads, sidewalks, street lighting, and drainage systems deteriorates. Like other real estate, City facilities require maintenance and reinvestment; some City facilities may have the potential to be put to new uses or the properties redeveloped altogether as the aging process takes its toll.

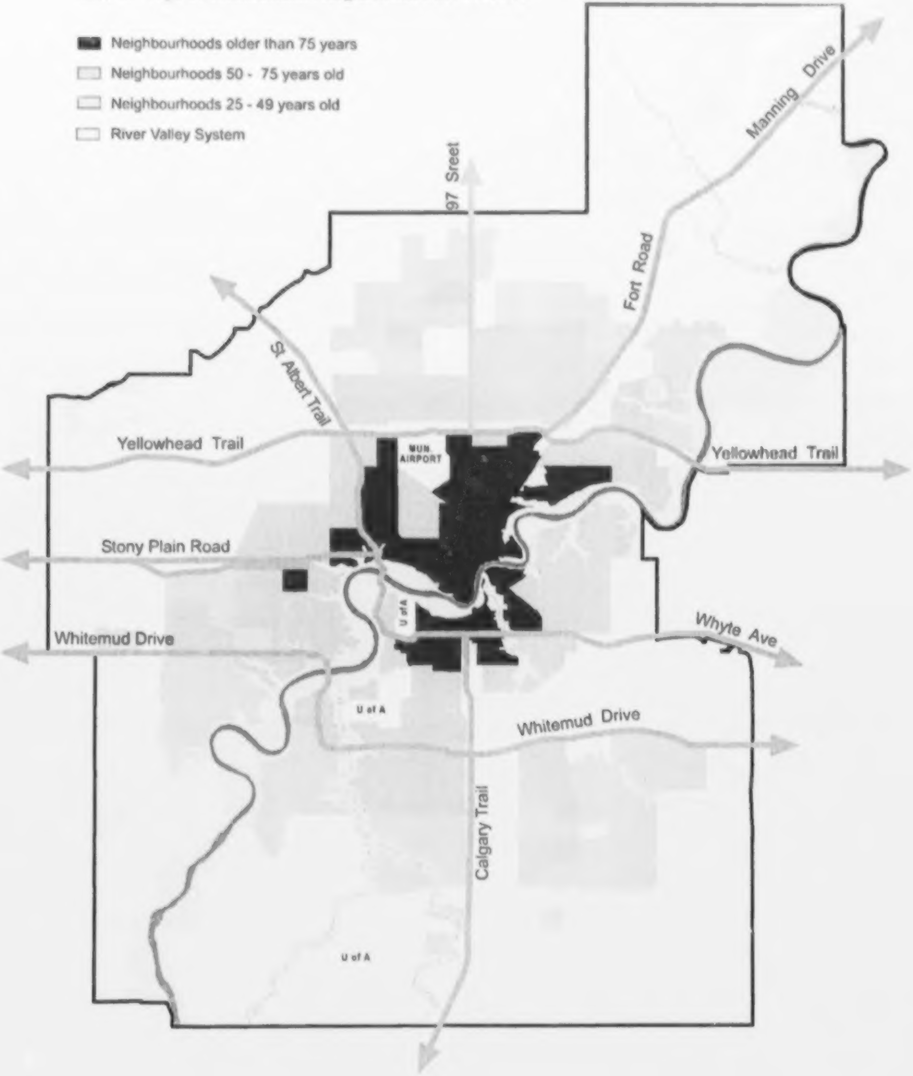
Reinvestment in aging City infrastructure and facilities is already taking place. In the next 10 years, the City's Capital Priorities Plan projects that the City will need to invest $3 billion to rehabilitate aging infrastructure. In mature neighbourhoods, reinvestment is needed in roads and sidewalks, street lighting, drainage systems, and City owned facilities. Currently, only $1.7 billion of the rehabilitation work identified has dedicated funding.

Age of Neighbourhoods in 2025

In 2025, Edmonton will have 128 neighbourhoods that are 50 years of age or older, more than four times today's numbers (see Figure 5). This increase reflects the large volume of construction that took place in Edmonton from the 1960s to the end of the 1970s. Map 2 shows the age of Edmonton neighbourhoods in 2025. In 2025, neighbourhoods like Laurier Heights, Rideau Park, Fulton Place, and Glengarry will be 50 years of age or older. This is also the case for a large amount of City infrastructure.

The majority of Edmonton's local and arterial road network, and significant sections of the LRT system were built in the 1960s and 1970s. Figure 6 shows the construction history of the City's pavement inventory.

Map 2: Age of Residential Neighbourhoods in 2025


Neighbourhoods older than 75 years
Neighbourhoods 50 - 75 years old
Neighbourhoods 25 - 49 years old
River Valley System
97 Sreet
Manning Drive
Fort Road
St Albert Trail
Yellowhead Trail
MUN AIRPORT
Yellowhead Trail
Stony Plain Road
U of A
Whitemud Drive
Whyte Ave
U of A
Whitemud Drive
Calgary Trail
U of A

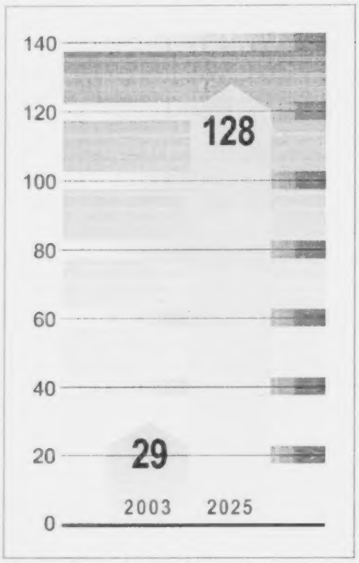


Figure 5:
Neighbourhoods 50 Years or Older, 2003 & 2025

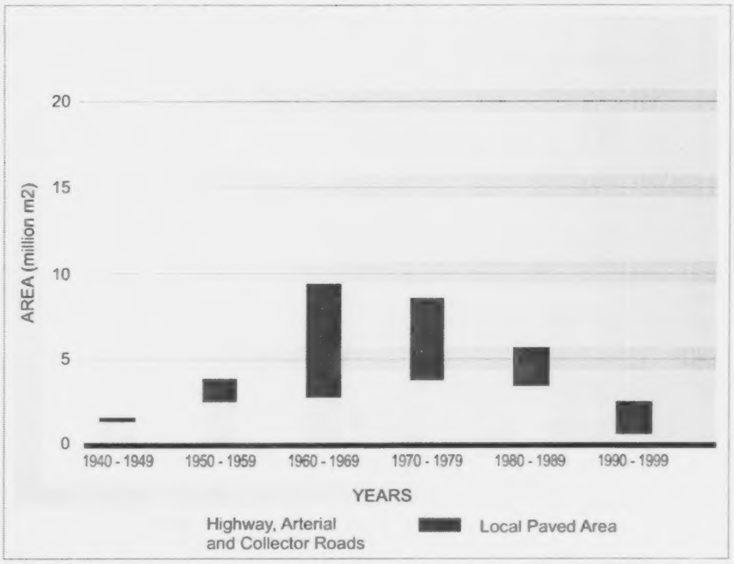
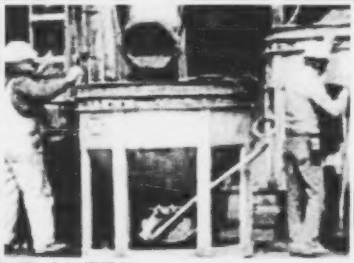


Figure 6:
City of Edmonton History of Pavement Construction

Growth in the amount of real estate and infrastructure nearing or older than 50 years, will require increased reinvestment activity. Aging trends also point to an increasing need for proactive and coordinated efforts to facilitate and direct both government and private reinvestment in mature areas. The Planning and Development Department has been an agent of community revitalization since the 1960s. However, despite efforts over the years, approximately half of the neighbourhoods that will be 50 years of age or older in 2025, currently have no area-specific land use planning framework in place. In addition, many of the existing plans originated in the 1980s, and may warrant revisiting in light of today's market conditions and forecasts. Map 3 shows the neighbourhoods that will be 50 years of age and older in 2025 and outlines the extent of planning activity that has taken place in these neighbourhoods.

The quality of life that mature neighbourhoods can offer - as places to live, recreate, shop, and do business - can be maintained and enhanced as they continue to age, through smart choices about maintenance, renovation, reuse, and redevelopment.



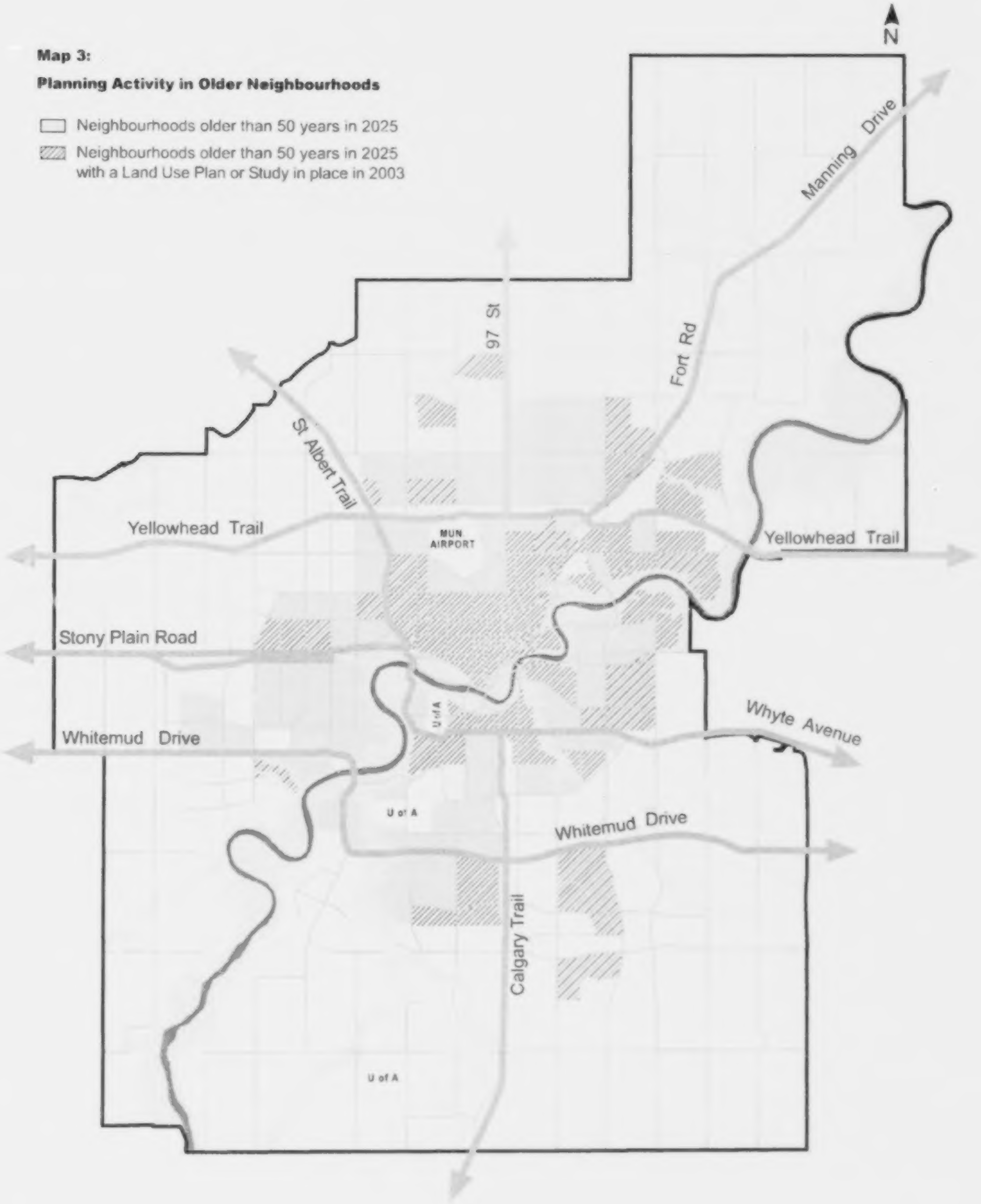
City of Edmonton Archives
Workers constructing the Northeast LRT line in 1975.

BLUE WILLOW

City of Edmonton Archives
Construction of City infrastructure in 1975.

Map 3:

Planning Activity in Older Neighbourhoods



☐ Neighbourhoods older than 50 years in 2025

▨ Neighbourhoods older than 50 years in 2025 with a Land Use Plan or Study in place in 2003

N
Manning Drive
97 St
Fort Rd
St Albert Trail
Yellowhead Trail
MUN AIRPORT
Yellowhead Trail
Stony Plain Road
U of A
Whyte Avenue
Whitemud Drive
U of A
Whitemud Drive
Calgary Trail
U of A

INFLUENCES ON EDMONTON'S FUTURE

Some of Edmonton's future choices will be affected by outside influences or actions by other levels of government.

INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL POLICY

Implementation of climate change policies, such as the Kyoto Accord and the Voluntary Greenhouse Gas Reduction Strategy may influence land use, transportation and location decisions in Edmonton over the next 20 years, as well as the growth of Edmonton's economy.

Under Kyoto, Canada has agreed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 6% below 1990 levels by 2012. This would represent a 26% reduction from projected 2012 levels. In Edmonton, reducing the emissions from transportation fuel use would play an important part in this reduction program. Currently 21% of the greenhouse gas emissions in Edmonton are from transportation fuel use.

The Canadian oil and gas industry has argued that the economic impact of sweeping emissions reductions would harm the Canadian economy and reduce investment in the country's oil and gas industry. Oil, gas, oilsands, and pipeline projects amounting to almost $56 billion, are anticipated to have a significant impact on the Edmonton economy over the next five years. It is uncertain to what extent these projects will be impacted by Kyoto, and in turn, to what extent the Edmonton economy will be affected.

Providing travel, housing, and employment options that are less dependent on the use of private vehicles, will impact future land use and transportation decisions.

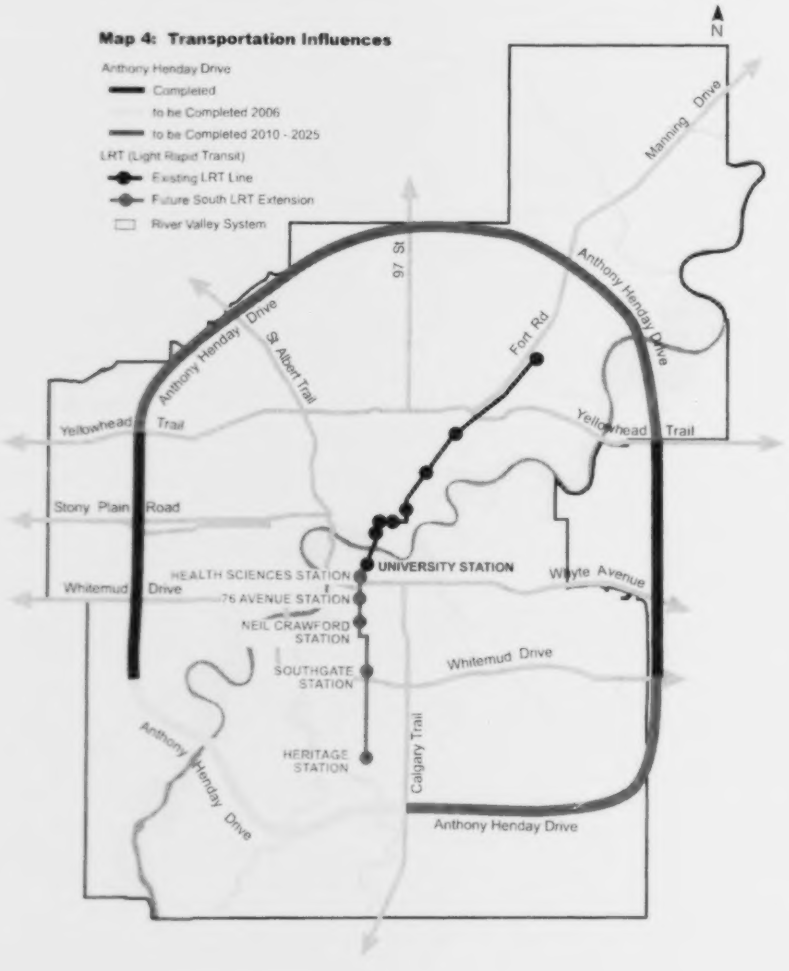
PROVINCIAL AND MUNICIPAL TRANSPORTATION DECISIONS

The provision of major transportation infrastructure influences redevelopment and new development opportunities in Edmonton. Over the next 20 years, two large transportation infrastructure projects should be completed: Anthony Henday Drive and the extension of South LRT to Heritage Mall.

The completion of Anthony Henday Drive will create pressure for new suburban development. The western leg of the ring road between Yellowhead Trail and Whitemud Drive was completed in 2001. The southwest leg of Anthony Henday Drive will be completed by 2006, the remainder of Anthony Henday Drive could be completed between 2010 and 2025. The degree of provincial and federal funding for this project will influence the time of project completion.

Extension of the LRT to the University Health Centre, Neil Crawford Centre, Southgate Mall and Heritage Mall will provide opportunities for transit oriented development, and mixed use redevelopment in the vicinity of the stations. The timing of the LRT extension is dependent upon cost sharing agreements and provision of funds from both the provincial and federal governments.

Map 4: Transportation Influences

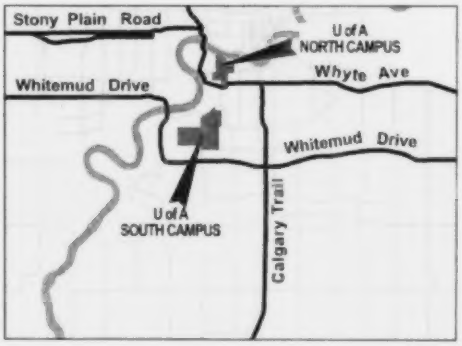

N
Anthony Henday Drive
Completed
to be Completed 2006
to be Completed 2010 - 2025
LRT (Light Rapid Transit)
Existing LRT Line
Future South LRT Extension
River Valley System
Manning Drive
97 St
Anthony Henday Drive
St Albert Trail
Fort Rd
Yellowhead Trail
Stony Plain Road
Whitemud Drive
UNIVERSITY STATION
HEALTH SCIENCES STATION
76 AVENUE STATION
NEIL CRAWFORD STATION
SOUTHGATE STATION
HERITAGE STATION
Whyte Avenue
Calgary Trail
Anthony Henday Drive

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA CAMPUS EXPANSION

The University of Alberta anticipates continuing growth in enrolment and research funding over the next 30 years. This will require the development of new research, teaching and student support facilities, as well as upgrading or replacing existing structures.

In the intermediate term 400,000 m^2 of new floor space will be needed, accommodated primarily on the North Campus. Over the long term, another 400,000 m^2 of floorspace will be directed to the South Campus, following the extension of the LRT. Map 5 shows the location of the North and South University Campuses.

Development and redevelopment of the University of Alberta's 350 hectares of land will have substantial impacts on the adjacent communities and indirect impacts on the city as a whole. Although the impacts can be noted, it is difficult to know their specific nature and the opportunities and challenges they will pose.



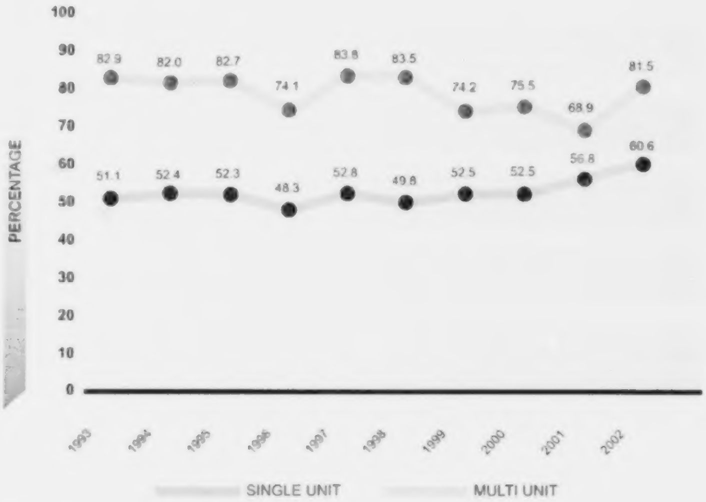
Map 5:
North and South Campus, U of A, Edmonton.

LOCAL AND REGIONAL HOUSING MARKET

In the late 1970s and the early 1980s, the City of Edmonton dominated the regional housing market, accounting for 85% of housing starts. Housing starts declined in the 1980s and has leveled off in the last ten years, with Edmonton accounting for 65% of the regional housing market. Last year, Edmonton accounted for approximately 60% of the single unit market and 80% of the multiple unit market. Figure 7 shows the history of Edmonton's market share of single and multiple unit housing starts over the last twenty five years.

Although Edmonton's share of the regional housing market has remained relatively stable over the last ten years, it is likely that it will decline at a relatively slow pace over the next 20 years. Regional communities are expected to continue to grow and are reaching a size and scale where their tax base can support the development of community facilities and services that traditionally have only been available in Edmonton. The increased tax revenue may also allow for regional communities to finance the expansion of municipal infrastructure necessary to accommodate growth. These factors will allow regional communities to compete more aggressively in the housing market, particularly the single unit housing market.

Figure 7: Single Unit/ Multi Unit Housing Starts as a Percentage of CMA
Source: CHMC



Edmonton is likely to maintain its share of the multiple unit housing market. The demand for this type of housing in Edmonton will come with the expansion of local academic institutions; the continued attraction of singles, young couples, and new immigrants to urban centres; and as baby boomers look for lower maintenance and retirement housing.

NORTH EAST AGRICULTURAL AREA

Members of Edmonton's business and environmental community have been working to prepare a vision to protect a large area of land in Edmonton's far north east as a unique agricultural area. If this vision is accepted by the citizens of Edmonton it will affect the ability to accommodate future development in this area.

BIG LAKE REGIONAL WETLAND PARK

Planning and development in north west Edmonton may be impacted by a draft proposal to create Big Lake Regional Wetland Park. The proposal aims to protect and integrate a valuable environmental resource with future development in the area. The proposal may affect land within the City of Edmonton that borders on Big Lake. The lake itself is just outside Edmonton's northwest boundary.

CAPITAL REGION RIVER VALLEY PARK

The River Valley Alliance, with membership from Devon, Fort Saskatchewan, Edmonton and the counties of Parkland, Leduc, Sturgeon and Strathcona County is working to develop a 90 km riverside park from Devon to Fort Saskatchewan with a fully constructed trail system. If implemented, the riverside park and trail system will create regional opportunities for recreation, and act as an amenity for future development.

EDMONTON'S DENSITIES

As shown by the neighbourhood density scale (Figure 8), Edmonton's neighbourhoods provide a range of different densities and housing choices. City council policy requires housing mix ranges of 15% to 35% multiple units and 65% to 85% single family units in new neighbourhoods, and some newer neighbourhoods have higher densities than mature neighbourhoods. For example, Eaux Claire / Belle Rive has more dwelling units per residential hectare than Windsor Park. It is also the case that some mature neighbourhoods such as Central McDougall are experiencing reinvestment and increased density through intensification.

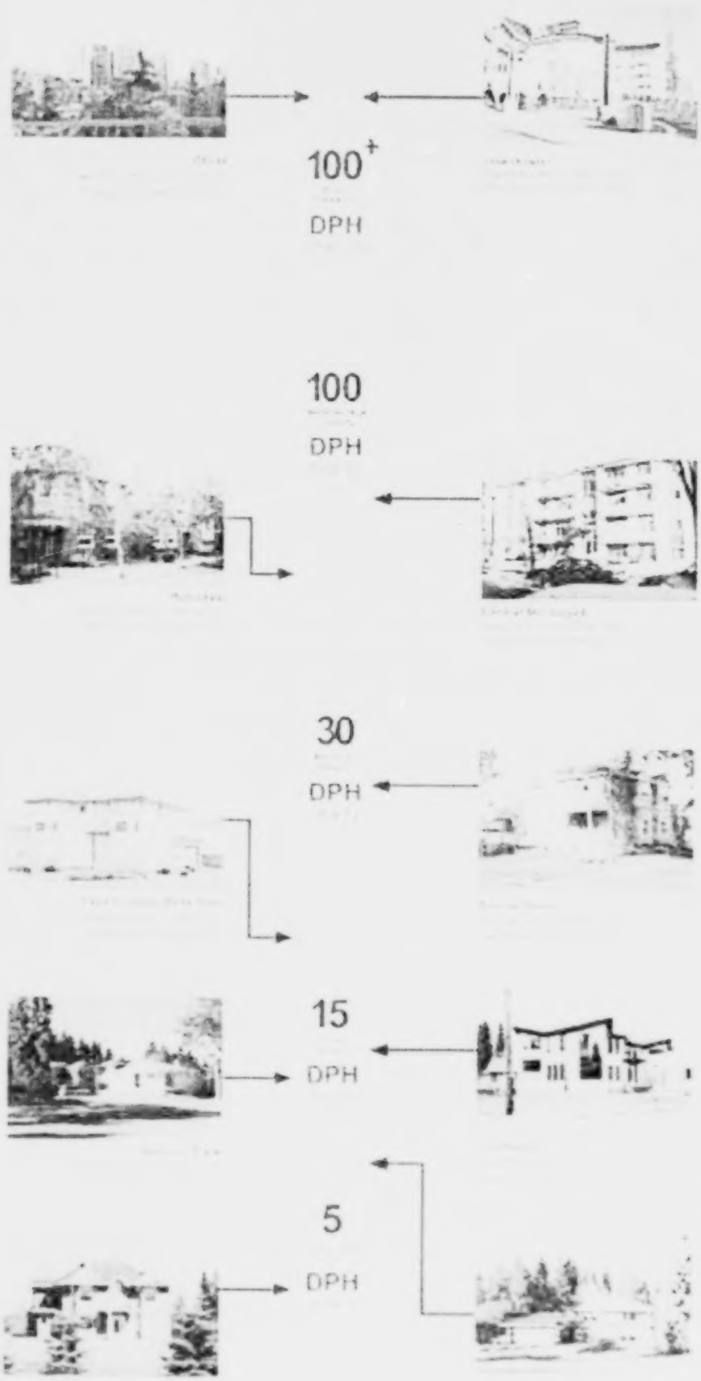

100+
DPH
100
DPH
30
DPH
15
DPH
5
DPH

Figure 8:
Neighbourhood Density Scale

NOTE:
DPH = Dwelling units per hectare
DPA = Dwelling units per acre

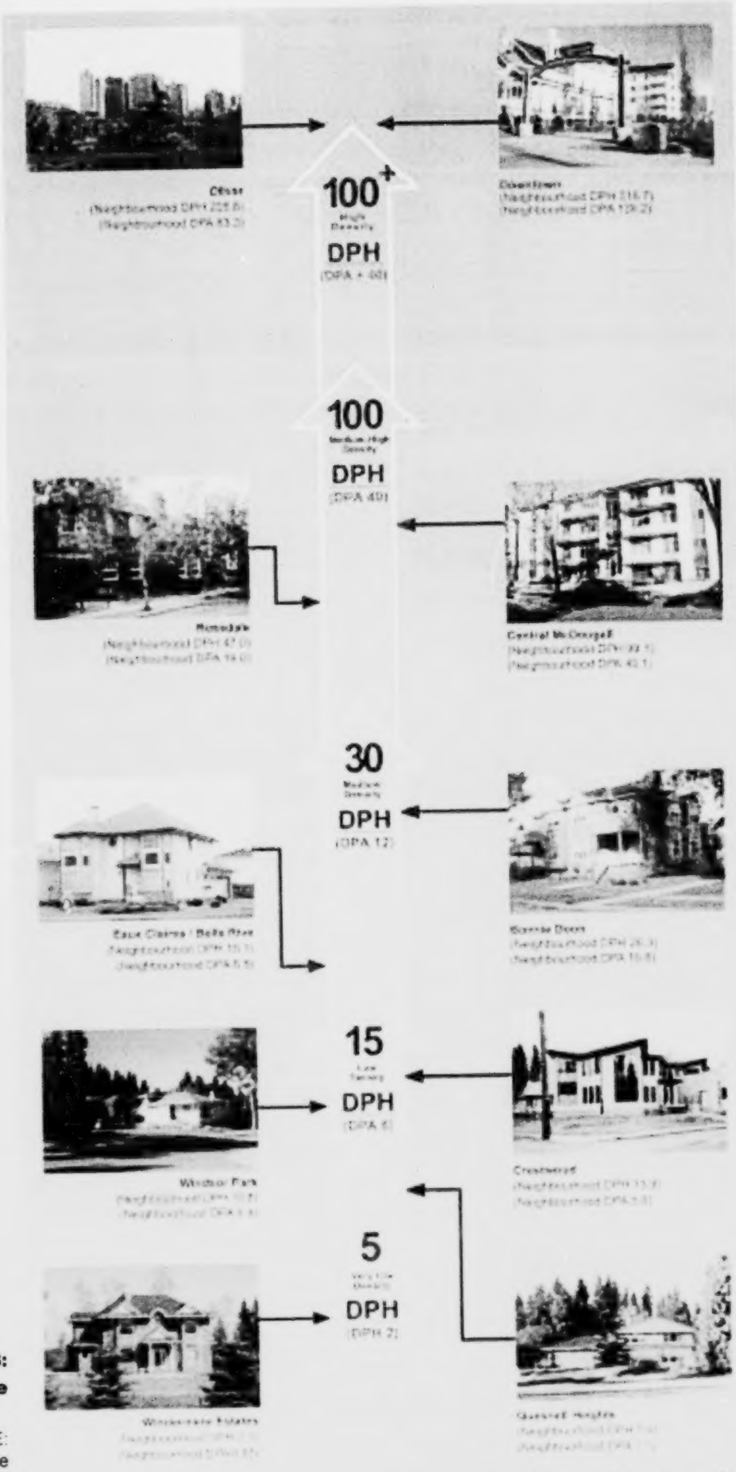

Oliver
Downtown
100+
High Density
DPH
(DPA + 40)
100
Medium-High Density
DPH
(DPA 40)
Rossdale
Central McDougall
30
Medium Density
DPH
(DPA 12)
Eaux Claires / Belle Rive
Bonnie Doon
15
Low Density
DPH
(DPA 6)
Windsor Park
Crestwood
5
Very Low Density
DPH
(DPH 2)
Windermere Estates
Quesnell Heights

Figure 8:
Neighbourhood Density Scale

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SMART CHOICE IDEAS

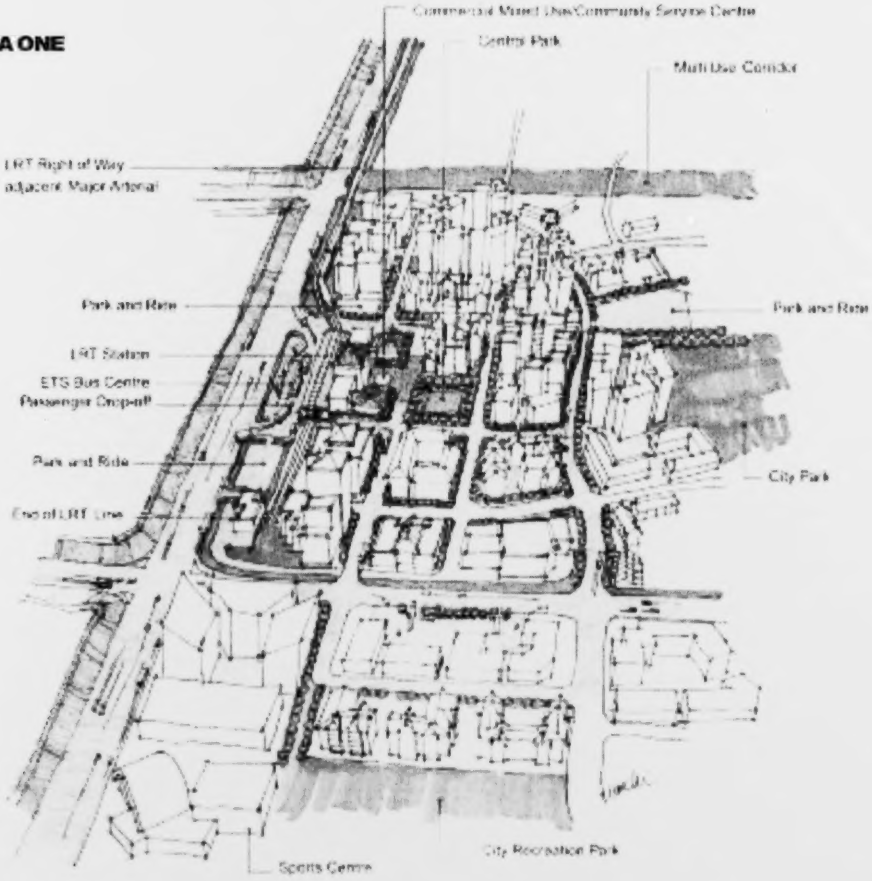
The growth and redevelopment pressures facing Edmonton may be accommodated, by pursuing the ideas and suggestions presented by EDA Collaborative Inc., IBI Group, The Dagny Partnership, and Urban Revision on the following pages.

Through June, July, August and September 2003, citizens and stakeholders are invited to view, read and reflect on these ideas and provide comments on the value of implementing any of them in Edmonton.

Citizen and stakeholder comments will contribute to City Council's future debate on the option of implementing any of these ideas. Implementation should integrate public and private reinvestment and infrastructure replacement to keep Edmonton's existing and new neighbourhoods and business areas vibrant and attractive.

SmartChoices
for developing our community

IDEA ONE


Commercial Mixed Use/Community Service Centre
Central Park
Multi Use Corridor
LRT Right of Way
adjacent Major Arterial
Park and Ride
Park and Ride
LRT Station
ETS Bus Centre
Passenger Drop-off
Park and Ride
City Park
End of LRT Line
Sports Centre
City Recreation Park

Transit Oriented Mixed Use Development

Cover Image: Transit Oriented Mixed Use Concept Plan, Junichi Hashimoto Architect

THIS SCENARIO DEVELOPS OPTIONS TO ENCOURAGE TRANSIT ORIENTED MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT ALONG EXISTING AND PROPOSED LRT CORRIDORS, MAJOR BUS ROUTES AND MAJOR TRANSIT CENTRES, WHILE IDENTIFYING CURRENT BARRIERS TO DEVELOPMENT.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Transit Oriented Development (TOD) refers to a mixed use residential and commercial area designed to maximize use of transit and non-motorized transportation, and are comonly referred to as transit villages. A TOD neighbourhood has a centre with a rail or bus station, surrounded by relatively high-density development and progressively lower-density spreading outwards.

An *Edmonton Journal* article described a transit village as similar to the heart of Old Strathcona, only with an LRT station at the centre. This image is accurate except that TOD aims for higher residential densities.

What is the Smart Choices benefit of TOD?

OPTIONS

- offers lifestyle (living, working, shopping) choices
- reduces need to own one or more cars
- reduces transport costs for individuals and households

VITALITY

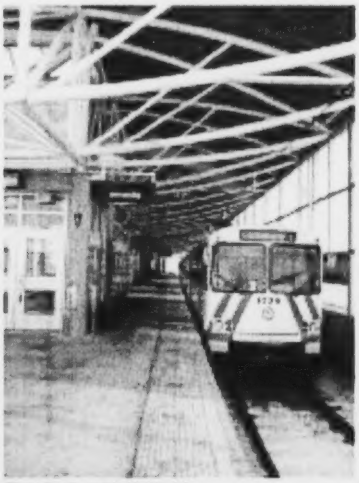
- can create more diverse neighbourhoods with active pedestrian streets

VIABILITY

- increased transit ridership supports the economy of transit systems
- greater environmental sustainability due to less use of resources

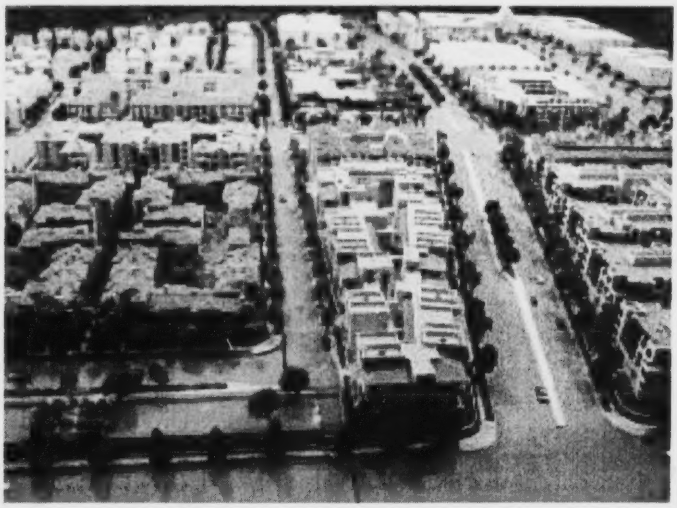
ACCESS

- ability to live, work and shop within the same neighbourhood
- increased mobility choices, such as walking, cycling and transit
- supports sufficient retail development to satisfy basic daily needs



(Photo Credit: Junichi Hashimoto)

Edmonton has a small yet high quality LRT network.



(Photo Credit: Junichi Hashimoto Architect)

A proposed Los Angeles neighbourhood planned using TOD principles.

2.0 DISCUSSION

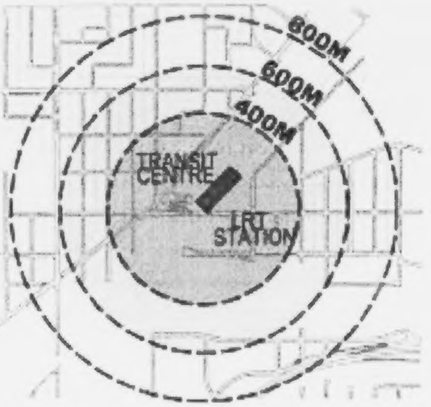
What is Transit Oriented Development (TOD)?

TOD neighbourhoods typically have a diameter of 400 to 800 metres which represents pedestrian scale distances. Neighbourhoods planned using TOD principles are commonly referred to as transit villages. TOD not only requires creation of transit villages, it requires that the villages be connected to each other by high-quality public transportation (1)

An original aim of transit villages was to provide sufficient densities, mix of activities and convenient pedestrian linkages for significant transit ridership.(3) However, good TOD places can also provide a greater choice of transportation modes, housing types, and lifestyles, as well as access to jobs and services. (2)

TOD is defined as a center with a mix of high-density residential, retail, office, public, and open space uses. Retail shops and services make up the commercial core with a transit station at the centre, all within an easy walk of homes (600 meters, or about ten minutes). The core has apartments and offices above ground-floor stores.(1)

Lower intensity uses surround the core. These areas include single-family housing in a range of sizes, small parks, schools, and light industry. Housing design includes front porches, shallow setbacks from the street, and alley access to off-street parking. Streets follow a grid pattern and link pedestrians and cyclists to the TOD.(1)



(Image Credit: EDA Collaborative Inc.)

A typical TOD catchment applied to Belvedere LRT Station.

THE CANADIAN TRANSIT HANDBOOK (4) SUGGESTS THAT SOME OF THE MAJOR PRINCIPLES OF TRANSIT ORIENTED URBAN DESIGN INCLUDE:

- A GRID ROAD NETWORK INSTEAD OF A DISCONTINUOUS ROAD NETWORK
- STREET ORIENTED USES ALONG ARTERIAL ROADS
- A MIX OF HIGH DENSITY USES ALONG ARTERIAL ROADS
- IMPROVED VEHICLE AND PEDESTRIAN ACCESS BETWEEN ARTERIALS AND THE INTERIOR BLOCKS

General characteristics of Transit Oriented Development

Transit oriented developments are mixed use, walkable, and location efficient developments with sufficient density to support transit service. Within these concentrations there is a mix of uses to satisfy daily needs within walking distance, convenient and attractive access to and from transit stations and a reduction in the amount of free parking to increase the incentive to use transit. (3)

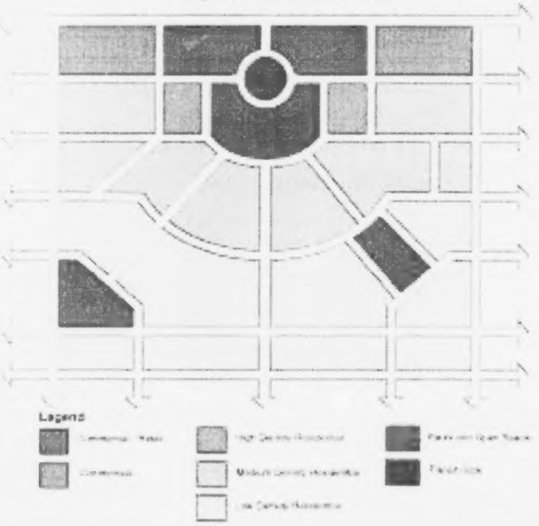
TOD and location efficiency

Location efficient neighbourhoods give people a wider choice of transportation options than traditional settlement patterns and development forms.

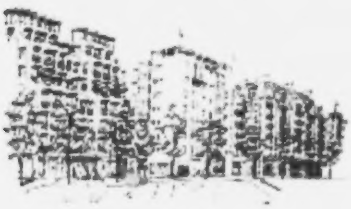
Location efficiency requires neighbourhoods to provide high-quality transit, a mix of uses and pedestrian friendly design. Location efficiency is enhanced through additional mobility choices such as car sharing, providing more transportation options for residents. (2) Simply put, location efficiency converts driving from a necessity into an option.

(Image Credit: Calthorpe)

Planning principles of Transit Oriented Development include high density resdidential, commercial and retail uses adjacent to transit nodes.



'IF THERE ARE TOO MANY APARTMENTS OR OTHER DWELLINGS THAT ARE ALL THE SAME, IT'S NOT JUST THAT IT DISCOURAGES FAMILIES, IT DISCOURAGES DIVERSITY, AND THAT'S VERY IMPORTANT. WHAT YOU NEED IS A MIX OF PEOPLE IN THEIR LIFE SPANS. THAT'S THE KEY TO THINGS' (5)

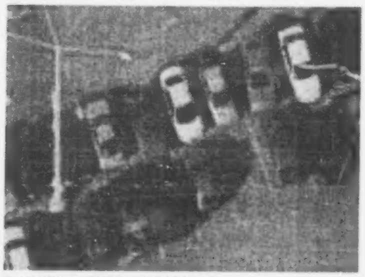


(Image Credit: Dieke Richards)

Higher density buildings in a transit village should be designed with detail and articulation to create an attractive streetscape.

(Photo Credit: EDA Collabortive Inc.)

Vertical mixed use has street oriented commercial and retail and residential develoment above.



(Image Credit: BUNT and ASSOCITES)

Reduction of land devoted to parking is crucial to the success of a Transit Village.

Ingredients of TOD neighbourhoods

Common ingredients that make TOD planning successful include:

- Strong links between strategic planning and the detail of the site and facility design
- Complete communities with walkable mixed use development. The opportunity to walk to and from transit stops and accomplish errands conveniently is further motivation to use transit rather than drive. Mixed use projects must include housing, significant employment opportunities from office space or light industrial facilities, retail shopping, and outdoor recreation and public spaces. Larger projects should also include schools, post-secondary education and entertainment facilities.
- Design that promotes pedestrian movement between uses, stations and adjoining areas. Pedestrian experiences are influenced by proximity of the starting point to transit, the walk distance to the destination, the overall street and site design and pedestrian amenities on the sidewalk.
- Higher densities. Although a minimum overall density is a prerequisite for making TOD work, TOD will not require everyone to live at higher densities. Higher residential densities can be achieved by building homes on smaller lots, attached homes (row houses or townhouses), clustered housing or multi-family structures (apartment buildings) (6)
- Streets with a high level of connectivity.
  Roadways and street networks should be designed for transit movement to be competitive with automobile travel time. Roads laid out on the grid principle, with appropriate spacing of arterial and collector roads, provide direct and regularly spaced transit routes serving all directions.
- Buildings are designed to contribute to the street. Buildings in a TOD area address the street and have an active street level frontage: use an appropriate scale to relate to the surrounding context; have a high amenity, quality finishing, articulation and detail; are designed to accommodate changing uses over time and incorporate sustainability principles.
- Parking is managed to reduce the amount of land devoted to it. TOD provides parking at the rear of buildings (to reduce the impact on the streetscape) and provides parkades with retail or commercial frontage. On-street parking is maximized rather than off-street. Mid-block laneways or alleys allow garages to be located at the rear of the lot instead of on the street frontage.
- Station design relates entrances to adjoining uses and neighbourhoods and offers high quality pedestrian and cycling facilities. Bus and LRT transfer areas are well integrated with stations. For transit routes, development with large parking lots fronting to the road should be avoided. (4)

- High quality of design. The quality of buildings and streetscape design affects the economic viability of transit villages. In the Edmonton context, a high quality built environment may be necessary to make the villages marketable.
- Parks and open space. Parks should be fronted with streets and development, rather than backed onto, so they become safe and functional communal spaces. The focus within the TOD should be on high-quality smaller parks. Linear parks and open space corridors can also be used to provide access to the transit centre. Larger recreation facilities should be in secondary areas so valuable space for denser mixed use buildings is available within the walkable area.
- Property taxes, development fees and utility rates are structured to reflect the lower public service costs of clustered, infill development.

Does TOD get people out of their cars?

WHERE TOD HAS BEEN PROPOSED OR IMPLEMENTED

TOD principles were refined in the United States as a reaction to increased dependence on private automobiles in the past 50 years.

The focus on public transit, especially rail transit, has increased throughout North America, and Edmonton is certainly part of this movement. TOD principles have been applied in a number of Canadian cities to support transit ridership. Some already had relatively high densities compared to Edmonton, making TOD easier to implement.

In Burnaby, a survey of transit use indicates that proximity of TOD to the Skytrain positively influences ridership. (7) The survey findings concluded that:

- Skytrain usage is highly correlated to car ownership
- Car ownership does vary by proximity to a Skytrain station
- Buildings beyond 900 metres are outside of the influence of Skytrain
- Proximity to Rapid Transit reduces parking needs by 9% to 12%
- Income and the number of residents in household are more important variables for car ownership than proximity to Skytrain

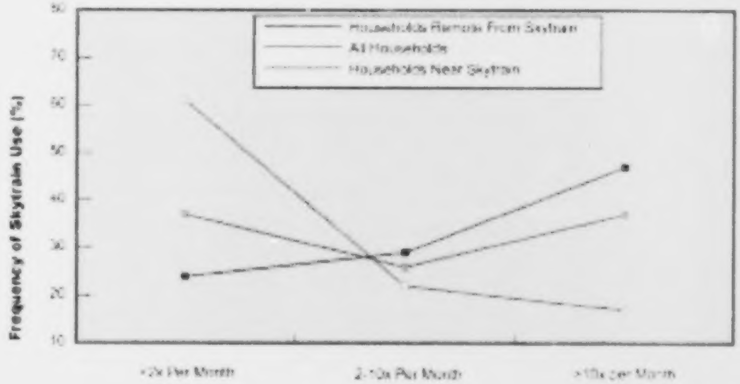
(Photo Credit: EDA Collaborative Inc.)

High quality pedestrian streetscapes encourage walking in TOD precincts and should help to support retail services.

HOUSEHOLDS IN A TOD NEIGHBOURHOOD SPEND LESS ON TRANSPORTATION BY DRIVING LESS OR BY OWNING FEWER CARS. (2)

(Image Credit: Burt & Associates)

The graph below compares frequency of transit use with proximity to transit. As proximity to Skytrain increases, ridership significantly increases.



(Photo Credit: EDA *Collaborative Inc.*)

Reduction in private vehicle usage is one of the goals of TOD.

(Photo Credit: Junichi Hashimoto Architect)

Stage 1 of a new community in Los Angeles incorporating TOD principles.

Potential impact of TOD on transit and car use

Studies show that transit usage increases with the density of residential development. A report by CMHC shows that vehicle use is largely influenced by factors beyond the reach of planners and engineers. The major influences are the number of persons in a household and household income. As these factors increase, so does car ownership. It also suggests that measures which improve pedestrian, transit and bike accessibility can result in substantial reductions in household vehicle use. The influence is greatest when TOD measures are applied in combination.

Successful application of TOD principles

An assessment of TOD projects to date in the US by Belzer and Autler (2002) shows most fall short of their full potential. Projects that clearly could take advantage of being adjacent to transit still use standard parking ratios. Residential projects fail to include units targeted at a mix of income groups or household sizes, and focus on one market segment.

In essence, the suggestion that making walking, cycling and transit more accessible through suitable neighbourhood design provides more transportation CHOICE and leads to reduced private vehicle use is supported by many studies, but may not make a substantial impact on the overall transportation system of a city. Even though the application of TOD principles may only result in a relatively small increase in transit ridership and similar reductions in vehicle use, it is still generally supported as a better alternative than recent planning practices and the best direction for a more sustainable urban future.

AS THE DISTANCE BETWEEN A CENTRE AND THE TRAVELLERS ORIGIN INCREASES, TRANSIT ACCESSIBILITY TENDS TO DECREASE MORE RAPIDLY THAN VEHICLE ACCESSIBILITY. (1)

OTHER CITIES IN CANADA WITH SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENT IN RAIL TRANSIT INCLUDE VANCOUVER, MONTREAL , CALGARY AND TORONTO.

(Photo Credit: Junichi Hashimoto Architect)

Model of a proposed community in Los Angeles incorporating TOD principles.

3.0 'FITTING' TOD IN EDMONTON

Edmonton was not built around a rail system, like many other cities. It has primarily been planned and developed on the basis of car use. A substantial change in the development approach would be needed for TOD to be successful, however this change has already begun.

The following discusses how the application of TOD principles is challenged in Edmonton.

Current local barriers to TOD

TRANSIT SYSTEM AND TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES

- Limited extent of existing LRT network
- Perceived lack of safety while on the system and accessing the system
- Automobile travel and parking is relatively inexpensive and easy
- Transit may not provide the flexibility people need in work travel schedules

CITY STRUCTURE AND PLANNING

- Neighbourhood structure, especially street pattern, of newer areas is not conducive to TOD or associated walkability
- Lack of detailed location specific planning
- Dispersed work locations. In Edmonton, 25% of the population works downtown, while 75% work elsewhere, compared to eight large Canadian cities where 37% work downtown, and 63% work elsewhere. (9)
- Industrial character of some transit corridors may not be compatible with residential development
- The lack of mixed uses in recent growth areas forces many people to drive for basic needs

SOCIAL FACTORS

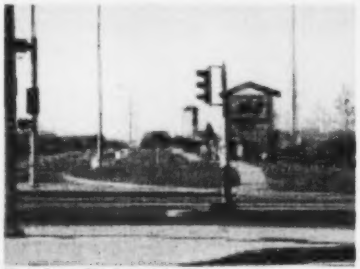
- Perception that public transport use reflects lower socio-economic stature
- Public opposition to change, particularly higher densities. Recent medium or high-density mixed use developments have been most successful on brownfield sites such as Railtown where the impact on existing local communities was not a major issue. Similar proposals for residential neighbourhood have met substantial opposition from established communities

PHYSICAL FACTORS

- Climate. Use of transit or active transportation modes such as walking and cycling become less attractive during the winter months. Local winter conditions reduce the range for walking and cycling

(Photo Credit: EDA *Collaboratie Inc.*)

Car parking in Edmonton is still relatively inexpensive downtown and readily available in suburban centres.



(Photo Credit: EDA Collaborative Inc.)

Car based retail development with large setbacks and car parks fronting streets reduce the feasibility of pedestrian access to and from transit.

(Photo Credit: EDA *Collaboratie Inc.*)

The barriers above including snow, berms, and fences adjacent to a local transit centre reduce the potential for pedestrian access to transit.

(Photo Credit: EDA Collaborate Inc.)

Edmonton has an extensive and high quality bus transit network closely linked with LRT.

(Photo Credit: City of Edmonton.)

Development within Edmonton has few natural barriers other than the River Valley and associated ravines.

Table 1
PERSON TRIPS BY MODE IN THE CITY OF EDMONTON

Mode	Percent of person trips
AUTO DRIVER	54%
AUTO PASSENGER	23%
TRANSIT	9%
WALK	12%
SCHOOL/PRIVATE BUS	1%
BICYCLE	0.4%
OTHER	0.6%

Most work trips (80%) are made by car. The preferred methods of travel to post-secondary institutions are the automobile (40%) and transit (40%). The majority of school trips are made by walking or as a passenger in a vehicle.

Source: City of Edmonton

ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS

- Lack of incentives for developers in potential TOD locations
- Current focus on funding for roads for private vehicle use
- Market forces of retail development focused on arterial road locations
- The Alberta government is not yet focused on TOD concepts

Local positives and opportunities for TOD

TRANSIT SYSTEM AND TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES

- City has a high quality LRT network with extensions planned
- LRT system services some major facilities such as the Skyreach Centre, Commonwealth Stadium and the University, reducing car access to these areas, even if primarily for events. This shows people might use the LRT more if parking at destinations is limited
- Federal initiatives such as the Kyoto Protocol may assist public transport and TOD oriented programs

PHYSICAL FACTORS

- Landform is relatively simple and quite flat, reducing barriers to access

CITY STRUCTURE AND PLANNING

- Development is relatively contiguous within City boundary, making provision of bus transit relatively efficient
- Bus system is extensive with strong links to the LRT network. Some bus centres and routes may prove attractive for intensification as their existing urban structure and mix of uses is compatible with TOD principles
- A large part of the City has a grid street system aiding the potential for TOD nodes and efficient transit
- Opportunity to build on existing transit centres such as Kingsway to incorporate greater mix of uses and higher densities
- Planned LRT extension to south will boost use and profile of system

Local transportation habits

Car ownership is highest in southeast Edmonton and lowest in the downtown and central areas. Bicycle ownership in the City is similar to car ownership per household. (9)

Post-secondary education is one of the biggest drawcards for transit in Edmonton. The University of Alberta and other post-secondary campuses create significant ridership for both the LRT and bus systems.

Local retail and commercial location factors

Retail and commercial uses in Edmonton generally locate on roadways where there is a high number of passing vehicles. Local centres away from these main roads have difficulty surviving economically. This influences the type and location of retail in TOD areas, unless heavy pedestrian traffic is generated.

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Source: City of Edmonton

4.0 IMPLEMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

Ways to implement TOD

- Plan TOD at the system wide scale: assess opportunities at each station (2)
- Establish TOD plans around transit stations and centres with significant potential
- Create station access plans that recognize the critical link between the station, its adjacent land uses and the larger area
- Create parking strategies for TOD projects
- Provide technical assistance to developers implementing TOD projects
- Provide financial and land assembly assistance to developers as an incentive for creating optimal TOD projects
- Establish policies for mixed-income housing in TOD projects
- Use phasing and design flexibility in projects to allow for market flexibility and allow for the evolution of TOD over time
- Train City staff in application of TOD principles

LRT, TRANSIT CENTRE AND SPECIFIC AREA PLANS

LRT and transit centre plans should consider the structure of the entire walkable catchment, the extended context to adjacent local centres and public transport links.

Specific Area Plans should address small transit centres and transit corridors with potential for higher density or a greater mix of uses.

Ensure adequate space for dropping-off passengers from cars – kiss and ride. Provide for taxis to pick-up and drop-off passengers. Reconsider the need for park-and-ride facilities adjacent to stations.

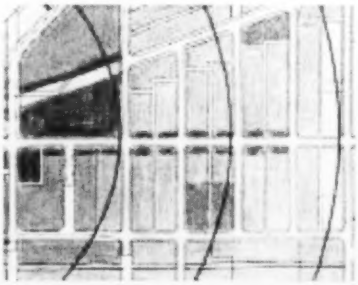
PROTOTYPE BUILDING DESIGNS

Where development is not progressing around LRT stations and transit centres, the City may consider a detailed analysis of potential built form to reduce developer uncertainty.

Building prototype designs can provide developers with valuable information about comparative densities, development flexibility, parking impacts, and urban design character. The prototype designs

The City of Edmonton's role

THE CITY OF EDMONTON'S ROLE IN TOD IS TO PROACTIVELY WORK WITH THE LOCAL COMMUNITY AND DEVELOPERS TO TRANSFORM PARK-N-RIDE TRANSIT NODES AND THE PROPERTY AROUND THEM INTO TRANSIT VILLAGES.

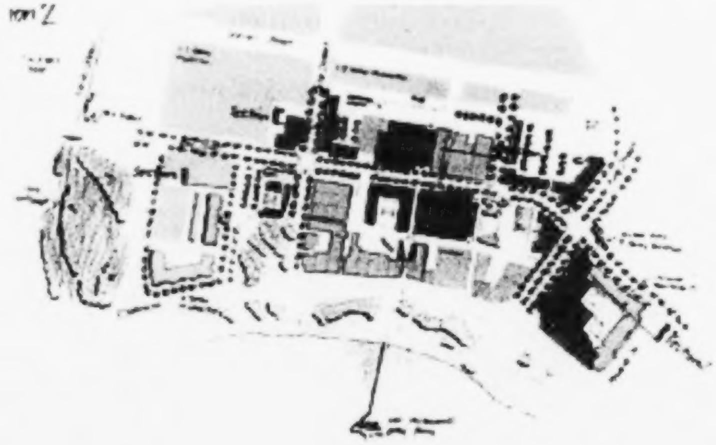


(Image Credit: EDA Collaborative)

Transit village plans should include a defined network of connected streets and a mix of uses.

(Image Credit: City of Lake Macquarie)

Example of the design investigation required for an Area Plan.



serve as a basis for the development of more detailed architectural solutions as well as articulating a vision throughout the development review process. (10)

ZONING

Consider prohibitions on certain types of development within the walkable catchment of LRT and major bus nodes, such as low density residential, big box retail, certain types of industry, and storage yards.

Restricting medium-density residential to agreed precincts in existing neighbourhoods, based on approved area plans, will reduce concerns from existing residents. Medium-density should concentrate on TOD nodes or transit corridors.

MODIFY PARKING REQUIREMENTS

Standard parking requirements can be an obstacle to TOD development and may not be relevant to locations with good public transport. Reducing parking requirements can decrease development costs and potentially increase returns, particularly for infill and brownfields redevelopment. (11)

The following alternatives to standard parking requirements could be considered:

- Consider eliminating minimums for parking associated with TOD development. Strictly control on-street parking to minimize spill-over.
- Set parking maximums based on local research.
- Allow for cash in lieu of providing parking stalls. Revenues would then be used to fund shared municipal parking.
- Allow sharing of parking between uses with different hours of operation. Shared parking takes advantage of varying parking demands throughout the day related to the mix of uses.
- Centralize parking to discourage development of many small facilities.

MODIFY SEQUENCING OF DEVELOPMENT

Require the provision of retail, commercial and workplace infrastructure at the same time as residential development. Consider triggers in the development agreement so that a mix of uses is provided concurrently.

MODIFY ROADWAY HIERARCHY AND RELATED DESIGN GUIDELINES

The City currently has three roadway categories – arterial, collector and local – which do not adequately describe the range of existing or desired road types. Refinement of the roadway hierarchy and related guidelines is important to support transit oriented development.

INCENTIVES

The consensus of most studies is that transit alone is unlikely to greatly affect development patterns in this automobile age. Other incentives are generally needed.

The City can stimulate the development of TOD through infrastructure improvements, public facility siting, and public/private ventures including joint development above or adjoining LRT stations. In station areas where developer interest is lacking, public actions can underwrite redevelopment costs and improve the access to and the appearance of the station. (3)

Incentives previously applied by the City, such as the downtown residential subsidies, could be applied to transit villages. Reduced parking requirements can provide an incentive to development. A City policy to determine appropriate locations for alternative parking standards may be needed.

5.0 APPLICATION

Assessment of potential for application of TOD principles to Edmonton's LRT station areas

The following is a broad overview of the opportunities and constraints for Transit Oriented Development at each of Edmonton's LRT station nodes.

DOWNTOWN AND UNIVERSITY STATIONS

The downtown and university stations already have intensive mixed use development around them. There is some potential for increased diversity of uses at these locations, and limited potential for additional building density.

(Photo Credit City of Edmonton)

Edmonton downtown and University of Alberta.

STADIUM AND COLISEUM STATIONS

The Stadium and Coliseum station areas are physically dominated by recreational infrastructure, limiting their potential for mixed use. The potential pedestrian catchment of the Stadium station area is limited by Commonwealth Stadium, a ravine to the east and the Northlands site to the north-east. The existing residential areas to the north and west of the station have intensification potential as many dwellings are reaching redevelopment age and a grid street system with laneways exists. The scope of this redevelopment will be limited by the small size of the lots. Land parcels adjacent to the rail line have intensification potential and some are being developed for medium-density residential. The concrete plant to the south-west of the station could be redeveloped over time to an intensive mix of residential and other uses.

(Photo Credit City of Edmonton)

Stadium Station adjacent to Commonwealth Stadium is heavily used for major events.

The Coliseum station area is dominated by Skyreach Centre and Northlands exhibition grounds. These facilities take up the majority of the walkable catchment. There is some intensification potential for the residential areas to the west of the station, which have a grid street system and laneways.

BELVEDERE STATION AREA

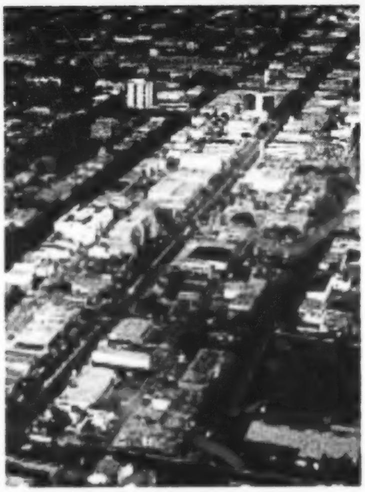
There is significant development potential around Belvedere station. The recent redevelopment plan (Fort Road Old Town), which focused on the area to the south and west of the station, provides a good example of the detailed planning necessary for the whole of the Belvedere Station catchment.

(Photo Credit City of Edmonton)

A portion of the Belvedere Station area.

The existing residential areas to the northwest of the station have potential for intensification. This precinct has a grid street system and laneways. The station area is supported by retail and commercial services along Fort Road, with potential for additional commercial development along 129 Avenue.

The area east of the station has substantial potential for mixed use development, however it is currently identified as an industrial area. The lack of a continuous integrated street system in this precinct is a constraint to walkability, however the large lot sizes may provide an opportunity for larger



(Photo Credit City of Edmonton)

The Whyte Avenue precinct is a good example of street oriented development with good transit access. If residential densities were higher, this type of development could serve as a model for Edmonton TOD.

scale residential and commercial development. A denser street system, quality open space and community facilities would be necessary to steer this precinct towards a transit village. Some light industrial uses could be retained along the edge of the rail corridors as a buffer to medium and high-density residential buildings.

CLAREVIEW STATION AREA

The northern terminus to the LRT, Clareview station area has a substantial park-and-ride facility as well as considerable undeveloped land. Constraints on its transit village potential include large infrastructure such as the 50th Street overpass and the Manning Freeway. Although there is a mix of uses in the precinct, the following deficiencies limit the area potential:

- The site planning is primarily structured for vehicular access
- The street system connectivity does not suit TOD principles and the large block sizes reduce walkability
- The park-and-ride facilities take up valuable land which could be used for mixed use development

There is long-term potential for breaking up the large development parcels to create a finer pattern of streets

FUTURE NEIL CRAWFORD STATION (PROPOSED STATION)

The University of Alberta south campus has potential for substantial new mixed use development, as suggested by the University's concept plan for this area. It is constrained to the north and east by established neighbourhoods.

SOUTHGATE MALL (PROPOSED STATION)

The major constraints at Southgate Mall include the physical barrier of Whitemud Drive to the south and a substantial amount of area devoted to a shopping mall. Pedestrian access across 111 Street is also restricted and residential densities to the west are likely to remain low.

The existence of some higher density housing within the walkable catchment of the proposed station is a positive for ridership as are the strong bus links to this node. There may be potential for an increased mix of uses, including residential and community facilities on the mall site in the future. Street front retail may also be possible through reconfiguration of parking.

HERITAGE MALL (PROPOSED STATION)

There is potential for mixed use intensification at Heritage Mall because it has a bus transit centre and will be a future LRT station. The existing shopping mall is not economically viable and is for sale. The site is characteristic of greyfield developments in North America where shopping mall and big box retail sites are being redeveloped into denser mixed use centres.

SURFACE PARKING LOTS DEVOTED TO PARK-AND-RIDE SHOULD NOT BE PROVIDED IN A TOD NODE CORE. THEY SHOULD BE LOCATED AT THE ENDS OF TRUNK LINES, AT STATIONS WITH LITTLE POSSIBILITY FOR MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT, OR IN SECONDARY AREAS ADJACENT TO THE TOD. PARK-AND-RIDE FACILITIES, IF PROVIDED, SHOULD BE LOCATED WITHIN 400 METRES OF A STATION.

The surrounding development is not ideal for a transit village but does have some medium and high-density housing. Residential development backs onto both 111 Street and 23 Avenue with large landscaped berms separating the dwellings from the roadway. This creates a substantial barrier to pedestrian access.

There may be some flexibility for the LRT station to deviate from the 111 Street alignment and be more centred on the mall site to maximize the walkable catchment. Supportive retail, including supermarkets, exists along 23 Avenue.

The site would need substantial restructuring of street patterns. A post-secondary campus and other community facilities would be desirable.

Application of TOD principles to bus transit centres

Although many TOD projects focus on rail stations, similar principles can be applied to bus transit centres and routes. Spread-out patterns of development make the more flexible and adaptible bus transit an effective transport option and a potentially strong factor for TOD.

TRANSIT CENTRE (GREYFIELDS) REDEVELOPMENT

In Edmonton, many bus transit centres are linked to shopping malls. Because of the layouts and grim exteriors, shopping mall sites are not easily adapted to other uses. The re-adaptation problems are so serious planners gave them the name greyfields. The Congress for New Urbanism shows greyfield malls can become walkable neighbourhoods.

Greyfield sites offer the combination of developable land and transit. Research shows failing malls tend to be in locations suitable for TOD. Greyfield sites are generally smaller and located on suburban arterials. Arterials make good bus routes, while the larger sites place most of the development on quieter streets. (12)

POTENTIAL APPLICATION OF TOD TO EDMONTON'S TRANSIT (BUS) CENTRES

Shopping mall sites located adjacent to bus interchanges provide an opportunity to incorporate a greater mix of uses, including housing. In some cases they already incorporate community facilities such as libraries and shop-front schools. Mixed use redevelopments are not only for malls in economic decline - diversification of prosperous malls may increase their long-term viability.

Intensification could occur through:

- redeveloping expansive parking lot areas with buildings addressing the primary streets
- introducing a greater mix of uses, especially residential and community facilities

NO RECENT DETAILED AREA PLANS HAVE BEEN PREPARED FOR EDMONTON'S LRT OR BUS TRANSIT NODES, OTHER THAN THE FORT ROAD OLD TOWN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN ADJACENT TO BELVEDERE STATION. DETAILED PLANNING OF THIS TYPE IS NECESSARY FOR ALL OF THE CITY'S TRANSIT NODES TO DETERMINE APPROPRIATE STREET STRUCTURE AND THE LOCATION, DENSITY FORM AND TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT.

(Photo Credit: EDA *Collaborative Inc.*)

As the economic feasibility of malls declines, there is potential to restructure them to transit villages, especially since they are often well situated for transit access.

(Photo Credit: Junichi Hashimoto Architect.)

A recently upgraded transit centre is located adjacent to the Heritage Mall site.

(Photo Credit: EDA Collaborative Inc.)

The redevelopment of the Meadowlark Mall site replaced some parking areas with retail buildings fronting the adjacent arterial road.

(Photo Credit: EDA Collaborative Inc.)

Recent residential development on the Meadowlark Mall site.

- redeveloping surrounding residential precincts to a higher density with a range of housing types
- introducing a finer network of streets to make the locations more pedestrian friendly and re-establishing street patterns that connect to the surrounding community
- providing more frequent transit service based on increased residential densities
- providing high quality pedestrian facilities within the centre
- providing multi-use trail links to the centres

The recent redevelopment of Meadowlark Mall included some of these measures. Other locations with substantial redevelopment potential include Heritage Mall and Capilano Mall.

The neighbourhoods around transit centres such as Kingsway and Jasper Place may also be suitable for intensification. They already have a relatively interconnected street system, a significant mix of uses and post-secondary institutions.

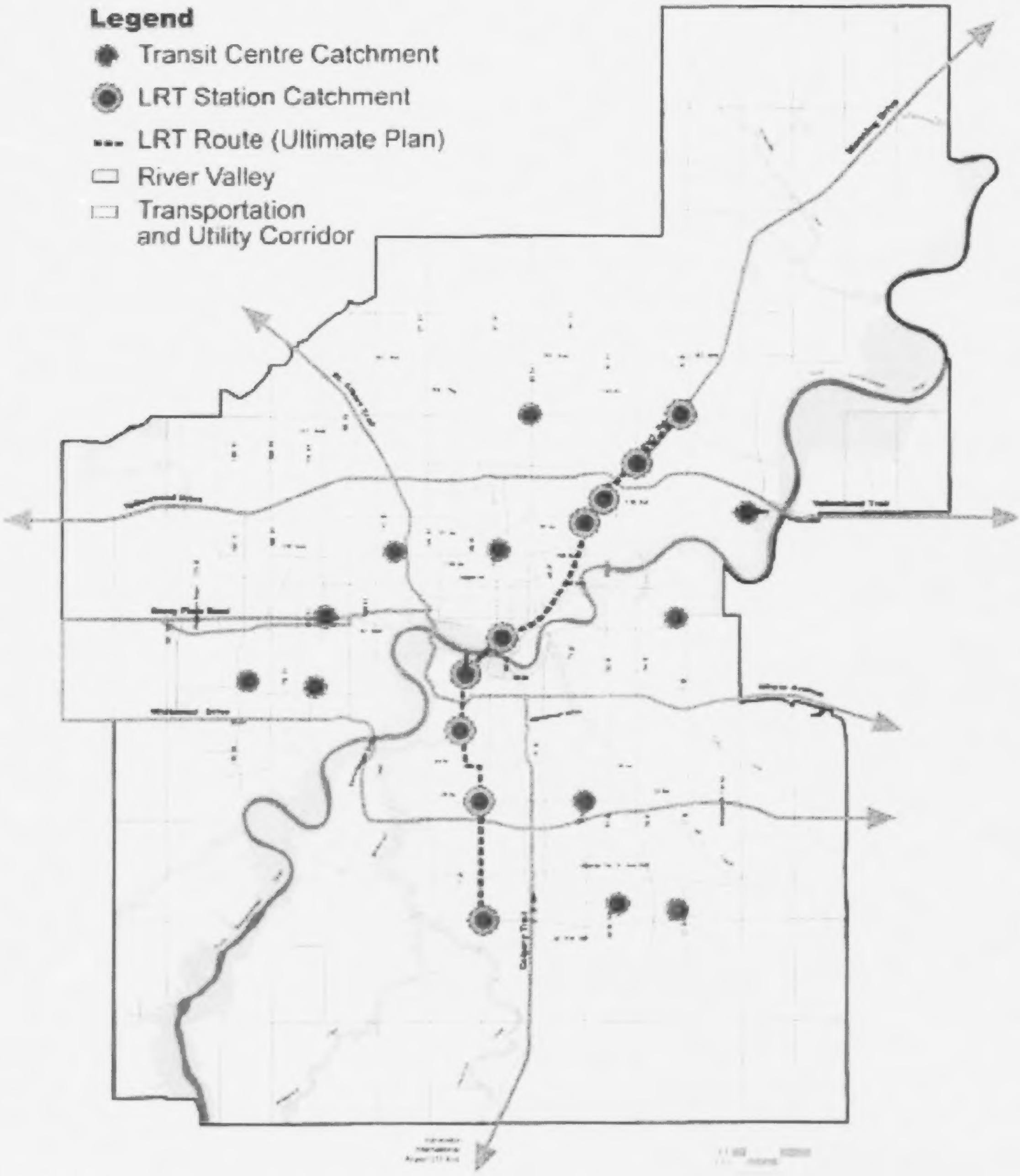
POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AROUND TRANSIT ROUTES

Some major transit routes such as 124 Street, Whyte Avenue, Stony Plain Road, 107 Avenue and 118 Avenue have good TOD ingredients such as substantial streetscape improvements and a mix of uses. They are also generally surrounded by grid street systems and many buildings are ripe for redevelopment.

(Photo Credit: EDA Collaborative Inc.)

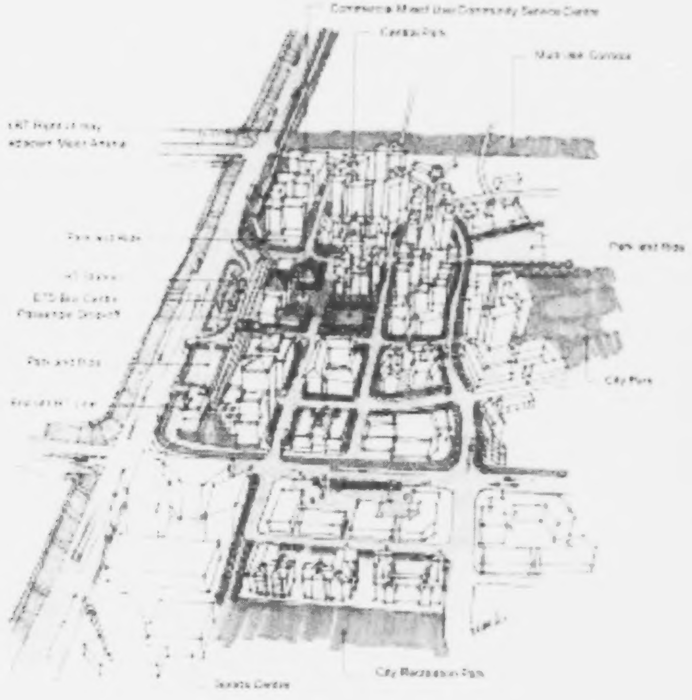
Some pedestrian friendly shopping streets like 124 Street, also have good transit services, making them good candidates for TOD intensification.

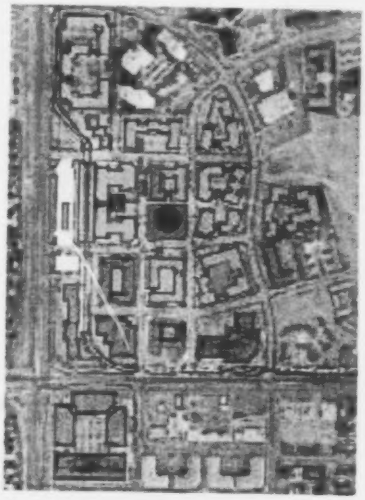
Potential TOD Locations and Catchments


Legend
● Transit Centre Catchment
◉ LRT Station Catchment
▪▪▪ LRT Route (Ultimate Plan)
▭ River Valley
▭ Transportation and Utility Corridor
Manning Drive
Yellowhead Drive
Yellowhead Trail
St. Albert Trail
Stony Plain Road
Whitemud Drive
Calgary Trail

(Image Credit:

EDA *Collaborative Inc.*)





(Image Credit: Junichi Hashimoto Architect, EDA)

Conceptual site plan for potential transit village

(Image Credit: Junichi Hashimoto Architect)

(Left)

Bird's eye view of potential transit village

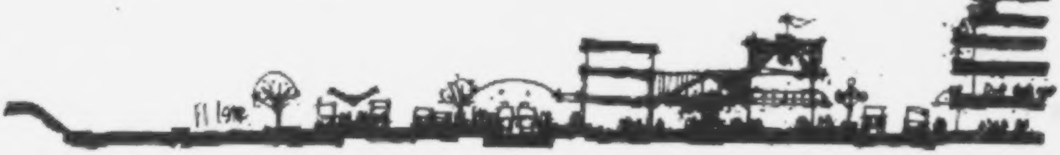
TOD principles applied to an Edmonton centre

An investigation was made of a sample transit and shopping centre in Edmonton with the aim of applying TOD principles in the local context. The accompanying plan, sections and birds eye view give an impression of the overall character of this potential transit village. They also suggest the type of planning needed to guide TOD development. Conceptual plans were produced outlining:

- the likely major area of influence of transit access
- potential street structure and hierarchy including potential bus routes
- location and mix of uses including residential, commercial, community facilities and open space within local context
- density of use and related building height and form
- building placement in relation to streets and internal site uses
- the relationship between the transit centre and surrounding uses
- the 'fit' within the existing neighbourhood structure

(Image Credit: Junichi Hashimoto Architect)

Section through potential transit village



6.0 OUTCOMES FOR STAKEHOLDERS

STAKEHOLDERS	POSITIVE OUTCOMES	NEGATIVE OUTCOMES
GENERAL COMMUNITY	Greater choice of urban environments including different residential options. Provision of denser communities may increase housing supply and improve affordability.	Incentives may have to be funded through general tax revenues.
LOCAL COMMUNITIES	Makes the neighbourhood more location efficient and provides more transportation choice. Gives residents an option to stay within their neighbourhood as their needs change. More employment may arise in the local community. New development may increase local property values.	May impact on existing lower density residential areas. Newer and higher quality development may affect the tax liability for property owners.
BUSINESS OWNERS AND EMPLOYEES	Alternative development form and variety of transportation alternatives may improve efficiencies. Improvements may attract new residents to city resulting in increased economic activity.	Change in focus away from car-based development may affect viability of some existing businesses.
DEVELOPERS	Planning policy which supports smaller and denser residential development will facilitate supply for this market sector.	New planning and design requirements will require developers to follow different processes.
CITY	Supports goals of quality of life and well being. Could help to relieve traffic problems. Makes the City an attractive place for existing and new residents. Supports transit system.	New policy will require staff resources and funding. Staff will need training in new policy to ensure practical implementation. Promotion of alternative development modes may require incentives.

SmartChoices
for developing our community

IDEA TWO

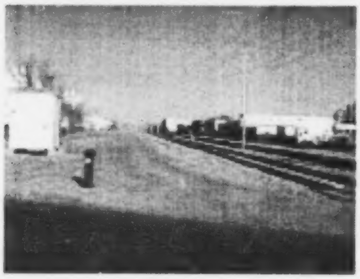
Multi Use Trail Corridors and Mixed Use Development

Cover Photo: EDA *Collaborative Inc.*

THIS SCENARIO EXPLORES MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES TIED TO FAST TRACKING THE MULTI-USE TRAIL CORRIDOR DEVELOPMENT THROUGH INVESTIGATING AND DEPICTING SELECTED ALTERNATIVES.

(Photo Credit: EDA *Collaborative Inc.*)

A utility corridor with established walkway and landscaping, and adjoining residential development backing onto it.



(Photo Credit: EDA *Collaborative Inc.*)

The northeast LRT corridor has potential for an adjoining multi-use trail.

(Photo Credit: EDA *Collaborative Inc.*)

A utility corridor awaiting trail facilities.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

What are multi-use trail corridors?

Multi-use trail corridors in Edmonton are generally abandoned rail corridors or rights of way for utilities (electricity, gas, etc) which can also be used by pedestrians and cyclists. These corridors are long and in some cases cross the whole City, offering great potential for access between neighbourhoods. Approximately 62 kilometres of multi-use trail corridors are currently dedicated in Edmonton. Only a portion of these corridors have developed trails and other enhancments. Multi-use trails are important to the City's overall network of non-vehicular linkages (i.e. trails, sidewalks and on-road bicycle routes). They serve both recreational and functional uses.

The corridors vary in width from a minimum of 10 metres and generally have a three to four metre wide asphalt surface. They are generally quite flat, have few road crossings and have restricted vehicular access. Because of their previous use for industrial purposes, their environmental and aesthetic quality differs from the trail systems in the river valley. They still however act as urban open space and have substantial potential for enhancement.

What is the correlation between multi-use trails and adjacent mixed use development?

Mixed use development includes commercial, office, residential, civic and transportation uses within walking distance of each other.

These can be arranged in separate buildings (horizontal mixed use) or mixed vertically within buildings. Vertical integration places these uses on top of one another.

A third dimension of mixed use is based on permeability, such as allowing live/work buildings throughout residential neighbourhoods. Finally, mixed use involves the mixing of densities, lot sizes, and product types, and temporal flexibility, meaning the change of uses in the same locality over time. (1)

Promoting mixed use development adjacent to the multi-use trail corridors provides the opportunity for people to easily access a range of services and address their needs locally. This also results in greater trail use. The mix of uses reinforces CHOICE in terms of dwellings, workplaces, environments and transportation.

The amenity and opportunity for mobility offered by the corridors can influence the type of land use and potential for intensification of adjoining development.

What are the *Smart Choice* benefits of associating the multi-use trail with mixed use development?

The following benefits are related to the Smart Choices fundamentals.

OPTIONS

- multi-use trail corridors provide pedestrians and cyclists with an alternative to driving.
- intensive mixed use development adjacent to a trail provides living choices.

VITALITY

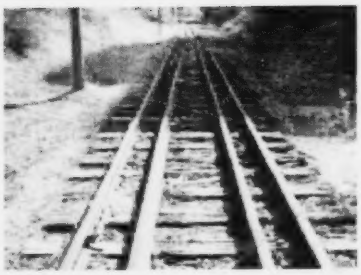
- individual health – walking and cycling improves health. Providing more dwellings near trail corridors increases opportunity for these activities.
- quality of life – allows for interaction with nature and other people and promotes walkability.
- trails and open space provide quality aesthetics for adjoining development.
- offering more destinations such as retail, commercial, community facility or workplaces increases use of the trails and associated health and safety benefits.

VIABILITY

- environment health – potential for fewer car trips and less greenhouse gas emissions.
- economic benefits – increases purchases in local communities, improves property values and and creates jobs (the trail provides opportunities for shared use with utilities).

ACCESS

- safer communities – trails reduce conflict between cyclists, pedestrians, and cars due to reduced number of street crossings and less chance of collisions with cars.
- users of the trail corridors provide casual surveillance of surrounding properties. Increased use of the trails improves casual surveillance of both the corridor and adjoining properties. Safety in numbers!



(Photo Credit: EDA *Collaborative Inc.*)

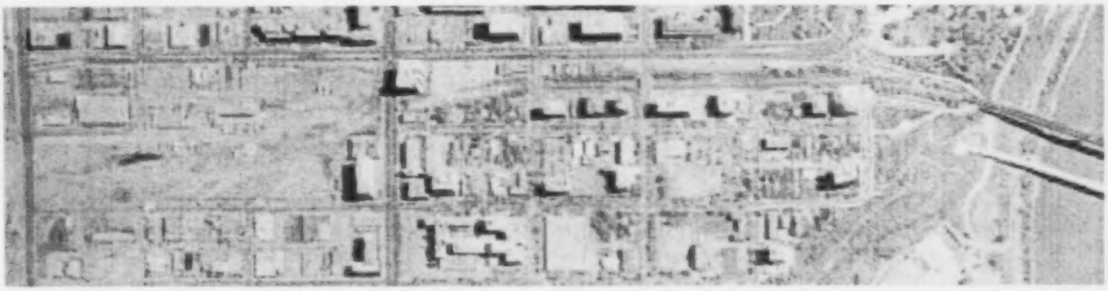
Enhancement of abandoned rail corridors improves access and the amenity of urban areas.

(Photo Credit: EDA *Collaborative Inc.*)

Apartments overlooking the trail corridors provide an 'amenity premium' for residents and make the corridors safer for pedestrians and cyclists.

(Photo Credit: EDA *Collaborative Inc.*)

Use of rail or utility corridors throughout the city provides a transportation alternative and can help to stimulate urban renewal.

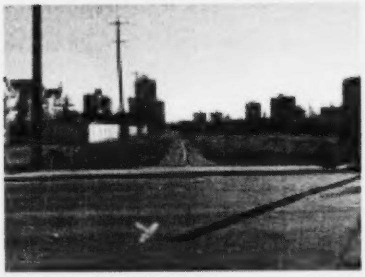


2.0 DISCUSSION

Potential multi-use trail network

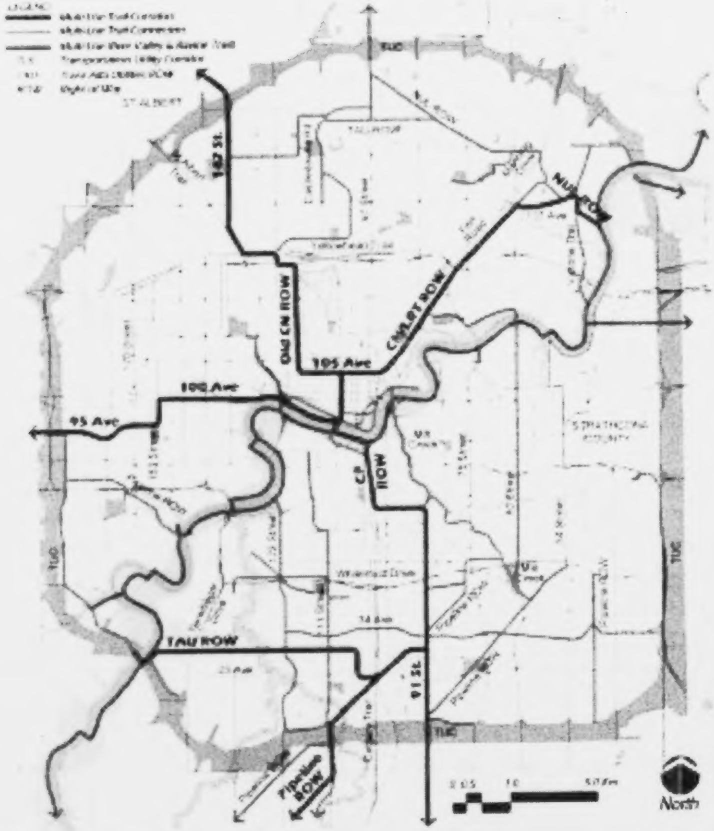
The accompanying plan depicts a future network of corridors throughout the city. Not all are available yet for public use and only a few have developed trails. Multi-use trail corridors that have been developed are part of the overall cyclist and pedestrian facility network throughout the city. The future network of multi-use trail corridors will provide improved access to a range of facilities and needs such as:

- The North Saskatchewan River Valley
- Schools / post-secondary colleges / University of Alberta / NAIT
- Places of employment (downtown, suburban, industrial)
- Shopping centres and major pedestrian focused retail streets such as 124 Street
- Places of worship, cultural and arts facilities
- Recreation centres such as YMCAs, swimming pools, senior citizens centres
- LRT stations and transit centres



(Photo Credit: EDA *Collaborative Inc.*)

A recently constructed portion of multi-use trail adjacent to downtown.



The network may also provide connections:

- between City sectors and neighbourhoods
- between parks and natural areas
- to other regional and local trails

MULTI-USE TRAILS SHOULD ACCOMMODATE A RANGE OF NON-MOTORIZED USERS:

- CYCLISTS
- IN-LINE SKATERS,
- SCOOTERS AND SKATEBOARDS
- RUNNERS AND JOGGERS
- HIKERS AND WALKERS
- DOGS ON LEASH
- PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

(Image Credit: EDA Collaborative Inc.)

The Multi-Use Trail Corridor Priority Network Plan (2001) outlines 62 km of trails considered critical to the development of a connected, multi-use trail infrastructure in Edmonton.

Local barriers to corridor use and adjoining development

LANDFORM AND PHYSICAL BARRIERS

The major landform and physical constraints to walking and cycling in Edmonton include the river valley, the major city freeways and the major rail lines. The natural character of the river valley provides a great recreation experience, but the limited river crossings and the steep embankments constrain travel between neighbourhoods. All bridge crossings, except the High Level, require a considerable descent and climb to cross the river.

Barriers to intensive mixed use development along the multi-use trail

The following factors could constrain preferred development adjacent to the corridors.

- existing uses, such as industry, are not easily changed in the short term to more intensive mixed uses
- the age and local character of adjoining neighbourhoods may not suit more intensive residential development in the short term
- the poor aesthetics of corridors due to overhead wires or rail use may make them less attractive for adjacent redevelopment
- the lack of corridor enhancement including trails and landscaping reduces the attraction for adjacent redevelopment

Features of the corridor

The following features would enhance safe, efficient and universal access for corridor users:

- generous pathway width with hard surfacing
- access for people with disabilities to all parts of the corridor and all associated facilities
- clear directional signage, route maps and emergency telephones
- adequate lighting for safety
- safe street crossings with a high priority for trail users
- attractive landscape treatment with trees for shade
- restriction of vehicular access to corridor
- public gathering spaces, public art and play spaces with seating
- shelter, drinking fountains and access to public toilets
- pathway connections to neighbourhood focal points including retail centres and community facilities

(Photo Credits: EDA *Collaborative Inc.*)

Arterial roadways can be a physical barrier to pedestrians and cyclists.

(Photo Credits: EDA *Collaborative Inc.*)

Transmission corrdidors may be less attractive for adjacent residences

(Photo Credit: EDA *Collaborative Inc.*)

Seating nodes should be provided at regular intervals along the corridors .

(Photo Credit: EDA *Collaboratie Inc.*)

Trail nodes can become a focal point for the community.

Trail use as a transportation alternative

The primary focus on trails in Edmonton has been in the river valley, mainly for recreation. Multi-use trail corridors can be transportation routes for accessing workplaces, shopping needs, friends, and public transportation. Increasing the number of trails as part of an expanded network enhances recreation potential but also enhances use for transportation purposes. This trail use may often replace use of a private vehicle. The relationship between trail use and other forms of transportation is discussed below.

ASSOCIATION BETWEEN CORRIDOR USE AND BUS / LRT USE

Pedestrian use of the corridor to access other modes of public transport such as buses and LRT is potentially high.

The connection between cyclists using the corridor and public transport for a trip is less likely. The number of people riding their bikes to LRT stations will be limited.

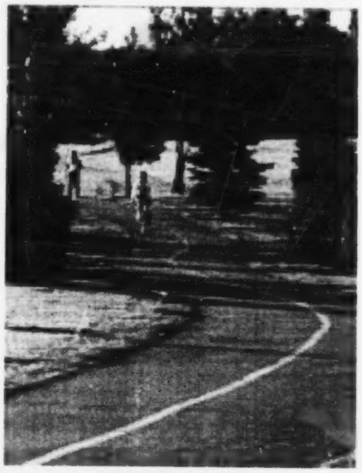
ASSOCIATION BETWEEN CORRIDOR USE AND OTHER PEDESTRIAN / CYCLIST FACILITIES

The Multi-use Trail Corridor Study focuses on a limited number of existing corridors – primarily old rail and utility rights of way. These corridors alone will not facilitate the movement of pedestrians and cyclists. Additional links are needed to secondary pedestrian and cyclist facilities. These include shared and pedestrian sidewalks, shared trails, such as those in the river valley and along the top of bank, and on-road bicycle lanes and routes.

The multi-use trail corridors greatly enhance the potential for walking and cycling by providing a safer alternative to sidewalks or riding on the road. This increases the potential for trips outside of the local community, especially to work.

ASSOCIATION BETWEEN CORRIDOR USE AND PRIVATE AUTO USE

Reliance on private vehicles should decrease for those within a reasonable distance of multi-use corridors.



(Photo Credits: EDA *Collaborative Inc.*)

Trails provide the opportunity for pedestrians and cyclists to access facilities, workplaces and services without having to drive. They also provide for recreational use with associated health benefits.

(Photo Credits: EDA *Collaborative Inc.*)

Promoting increased use of trail corridors should reduce private vehicle usage.

(Photo Credits: EDA *Collaborative Inc.*)

Multi-use trails in the river valley are used for both recreation and commuting.

3.0 FITTING IN WITH EDMONTON

Examples of mixed use development adjacent to the corridors

Edmonton already provides good examples of intensive mixed use development adjacent to enhanced sections of the multi-use trail corridor. Their success is evident through the popularity of the adjoining development and the substantial use of the corridor. This provides a sound basis for considering the potential of other corridors and the appropriate character for development adjacent to them.

Medium to high density residential is the primary type of new development adjacent to the current multi-use trail corridor. Examples include:

- High Level Bridge to Jasper Avenue west of 109 Street
- Railtown (Jasper Ave to 104 Avenue) west of 109 Street
- Old CN right of way (104 Avenue to 107 Avenue) west of 120 Street

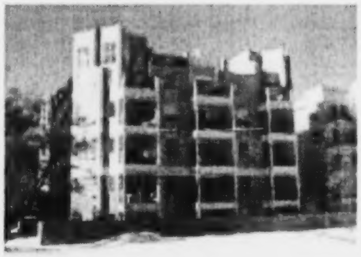
Some of the above examples have incorporated horizontal mixed use such as supermarkets, restaurants, convenience stores and professional suites. Even though the commercial developments are partially oriented to vehicular access, the multi-use corridor has increased pedestrian access from surrounding offices and dwellings. Cycling through the corridor is not yet heavily used due to its short length.

These examples are on the edge of the downtown core where a large number of existing residents and office workers support the new retail and commercial facilities. Another factor is the location adjacent to 104 Street and Jasper Avenue, allowing easy vehicular access to businesses. It is reasonable to expect similar feasible developments along other corridors.

Key determinants for the successful development of mixed use with the trail corridors

Mixed use development associated with multi-use trails has the best chance of success where:

- age and quality of existing buildings adjacent to the corridor - older precincts with low-rise commercial or residential development are ripe for redevelopment
- proximity to the downtown core - the services and facilities in the downtown area are a stimulant to redevelopment
- proximity and linkage to the river valley as it offers a 'lifestyle premium'
- proximity to convenient retail and commercial services, especially quality shopping districts and supermarkets
- access to community and recreation facilities and open space such as parks
- access to public transport, such as LRT stations, transit centres and major bus routes



(Photos Credit: EDA Collaborative Inc.)

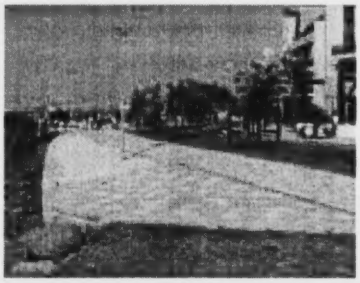
New residential apartments adjacent to the corridor south of Jasper Avenue.

(Photo Credit: EDA Collaborative Inc.)

Recent development in Railtown includes a mix of residential and commercial.

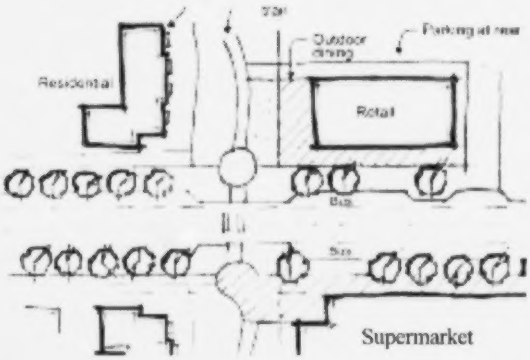
(Photo Credit: EDA Collaborative Inc.)

Proximity to the downtown is likely to be a determinant for development.



(Photos Credit: City of Lake Macquarie)

This enhanced multi-use pathway project stimulated an adjacent apartment development with ground floor retail.

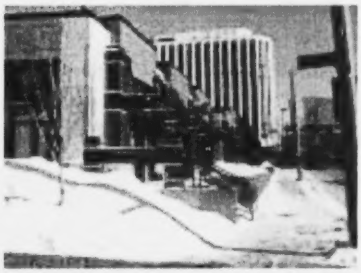


(Image Credit: EDA *Collaborative Inc.*)

Example of site planning for a local centre adjacent to multi-use corridor. Note how buildings address the street and corridor.

Ingredients which would contribute to the mutual success of the multi-use trail and the adjoining development include:

- a mix of adjoining uses for a wide range of services and employment
- home based businesses
- convenient links to public transport
- high quality aesthetics for trail users and adjoining residents
- streets, residences and businesses overlooking the corridor for safety
- higher density residential for sections of corridor already serviced by retail, commercial and community services
- areas serviced by utilities and infrastructure
- links to shops, community facilities and schools



(Photos Credit: EDA *Collaborative Inc.*)

A mix of commercial, retail and residential land uses adjacent to the multi-use trail is preferred.

Most suitable types of adjoining land uses

Residential uses should be a major component of the land use. Where industrial and storage uses exist and are no longer functional, they could be phased out via rezoning.

The primary uses to be considered include:

- Residential: a range of housing types and sizes to ensure social diversity
- Retail and commercial: supermarkets and shops for everyday needs
- Institutional: schools, post-secondary colleges and universities
- Community facilities: recreation centres, churches, halls, senior centres
- Office and light industrial space

(Photos Credit: EDA *Collaborative Inc.*)

A well defined yet open edge treatement to the corridor improves the opportunity for casual surveillance.

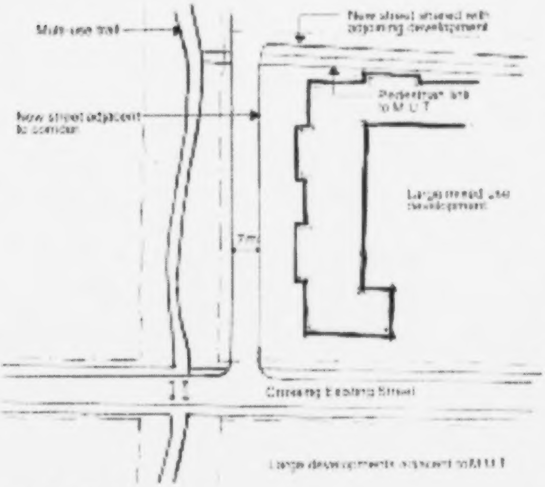
Suitable character and considerations for adjoining development

Buildings adjacent to the corridor should respond to the context of the location. For example, the corridor near downtown is fringed with taller high and medium density buildings to fit the context, real estate values and availability of services and jobs.

In general however, building scale along the corridor should be of medium density. As the corridor is public open space, the character of the surrounding development should not over-power it visually or physically.

Overshadowing of the corridor is undesirable, so the setback, height and massing of adjoining buildings should be planned to minimize this.

If buildings back onto the corridor, visibility from the buildings should be maintained through windows and balconies. Where a retail function of a building can abut the corridor, active frontages, pedestrian linkages and outdoor dining should be considered.


Multi-use trail
New street shared with adjoining development
Pedestrian link to M.U.T
New street adjacent to corridor
Large mixed use development
7m
Crossing Existing Street
Large developments adjacent to M.U.T

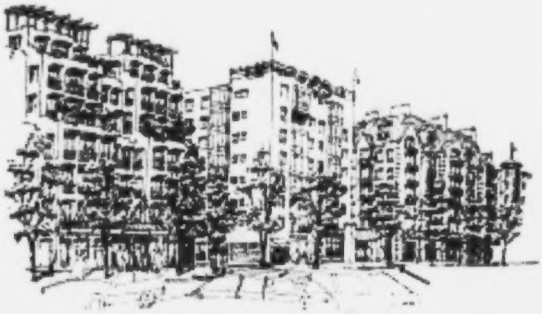
(Image Credit: EDA *Collaborative Inc.*)

Depending on the local street structure and scale of the adjoining site, a street edge to the corridor could be provided.

It may not always be feasible or functional for buildings to address the corridor, as they will generally address adjoining streets. Depending on the local street structure and scale of the adjoining site, a street edge to the corridor could be provided with development then facing the corridor. This would enhance safety aspects of the corridor and give it more of a local park feeling.

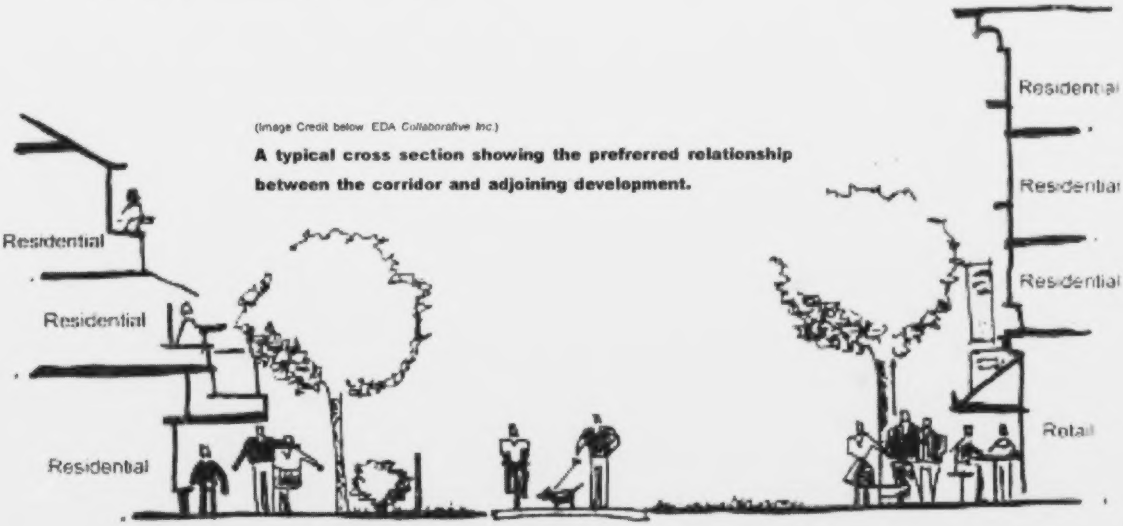
Edge treatment between the corridor and the adjoining private lots should clearly delineate the property boundary and restrict vehicle access but should not incorporate solid fencing. Any fencing should be open to enable visibility between the corridor and adjoining space and maintain a high aesthetic quality. Privacy issues can be addressed through landscaping. The private property boundary should be carefully delineated, through gating or signage.

Views of service areas associated with adjoining development, such as waste collection areas and parking lots, should be filtered by landscaping and low fence structures.



(Image Credit left: Dieke Richards)

Articulation and detailing of buildings is desirable to reduce their apparent mass adjacent to the trail corridors.


Residential
Residential
Residential
Residential
Residential
Residential
Retail

(Image Credit below: EDA *Collaborative Inc.*)

A typical cross section showing the prefrerred relationship between the corridor and adjoining development.

4.0 IMPLEMENTATION

Linkage, Corridor and Specific Area Planning

LINKAGE PLANNING

A masterplan for existing and potential pedestrian and cyclist linkages citywide is needed and already under consideration by the Transportation Department. This plan should lead to an implementation strategy and policy statement.

CORRIDOR PLANNING

Master-planning for development along the corridor is also needed and should thoroughly analyse development opportunities and constraints city-wide. Broad determination of suitable density and land use would be made as part of this planning process. A master plan for the corridors would identify the high priority areas requiring more detailed investigation.

AREA PLANNING

Areas with high potential for mixed use intensification would benefit from a detailed Local Area Plan. The Plan should consider the context of the local area of influence of the corridor and be conscious of existing neighbourhood character, especially in terms of building scale and character. This contextual analysis may need to extend, depending on the proximity of adjoining centres and significant features.

As part of the site analysis for area plans, significant views from the corridor should be recognised and preserved where possible. Along corridors originally used as rail lines there may be buildings with heritage significance. A heritage assessment of the corridors should be included in any area planning and as part of the site analysis of individual sites.

URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES

Precincts with high development potential adjacent to the corridors would benefit from urban design guidelines to help achieve the desired building character identified in the area plans. These guidelines would provide further detail on building height, setback, articulation, materials, etc.

DESIGN OF TRAIL FACILITIES

In high priority areas, detailed design is necessary for the facilities within the corridor. This would allow the City to provide the facilities as an incentive to development or allow developers to construct portions of the trail.

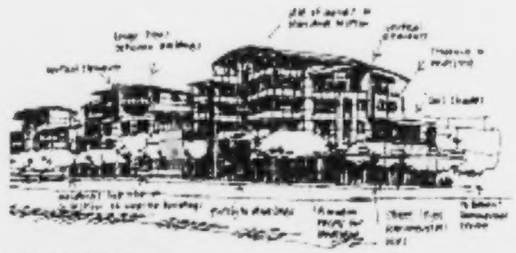
CORRIDOR ZONING

The zoning of the multi-use trail corridor may need modification to reflect its open space and transportation focus and allow more flexibility in terms of uses for example, leasing portions for outdoor dining.

Rezoning of land adjacent to the multi-use corridor should include a mix of uses as recommended, with a focus on medium to high density. Vertical mixed use should be accomodated in this zoning.

Existing zoning for commercial and retail uses along the corridors could be retained where viable or refocused to a mixed use with residential where less viable. Existing commercial uses would in most cases be compatible with new residential uses. Some adjoining streets have the potential for home based businesses.

Industrial or storage uses, functional when the corridors were used for trains, may no longer be compatible with the new function of the multi-use corridor. These could be rezoned, as long as sufficient alternative industrial locations are available.



(Image Credit: Dieke Richards)

Urban design guidelines would indicate the desired form and quality of buildings along the corridor.

Funding and Incentives

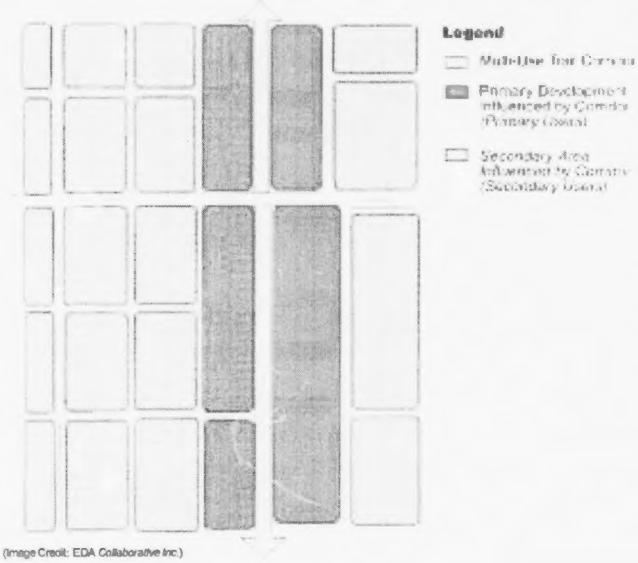
To date, the City and other levels of government have almost exclusively funded trail and corridor facility development. There is precedent, however, in other City of Edmonton contribution plans to require provision of public facilities with private cost sharing. Care needs to be taken so that development adjacent to the corridor is not stifled by a cost sharing arrangement. The distribution of shared costs should be equitable, as the trail will benefit development within proximity of the corridor, not only adjacent to it.

Property owners undertaking new development or making substantial renovations adjacent to the multi-use corridor, could be asked to contribute to fund new trail facility construction. Developers could also build adjacent sections of trail as their required contribution.

Parking concessions could be provided for residential and mixed use developments adjacent to multi-use corridors in recognition of their potential to rely less on vehicle access than standard development projects. This will be most effective close to major bus routes.

The area of influence of a multi-use corridor

The potential area influenced by a multi-use corridor is significant because of its potential impact on land use and travel patterns. An analysis of acceptable pedestrian distances could be applied, using the corridor as part of the route, however this would not consider the substantial use by cyclists.


Legend
Multi-Use Trail Corridor
Primary Development Influenced by Corridor (Primary Users)
Secondary Area Influenced by Corridor (Secondary Users)

(Image Credit: EDA Collaborative Inc.)

For pedestrians, a 5-minute walking distance or 400 meters could be considered to determine a catchment. However, the additional walking time along the corridor would have to be incorporated.

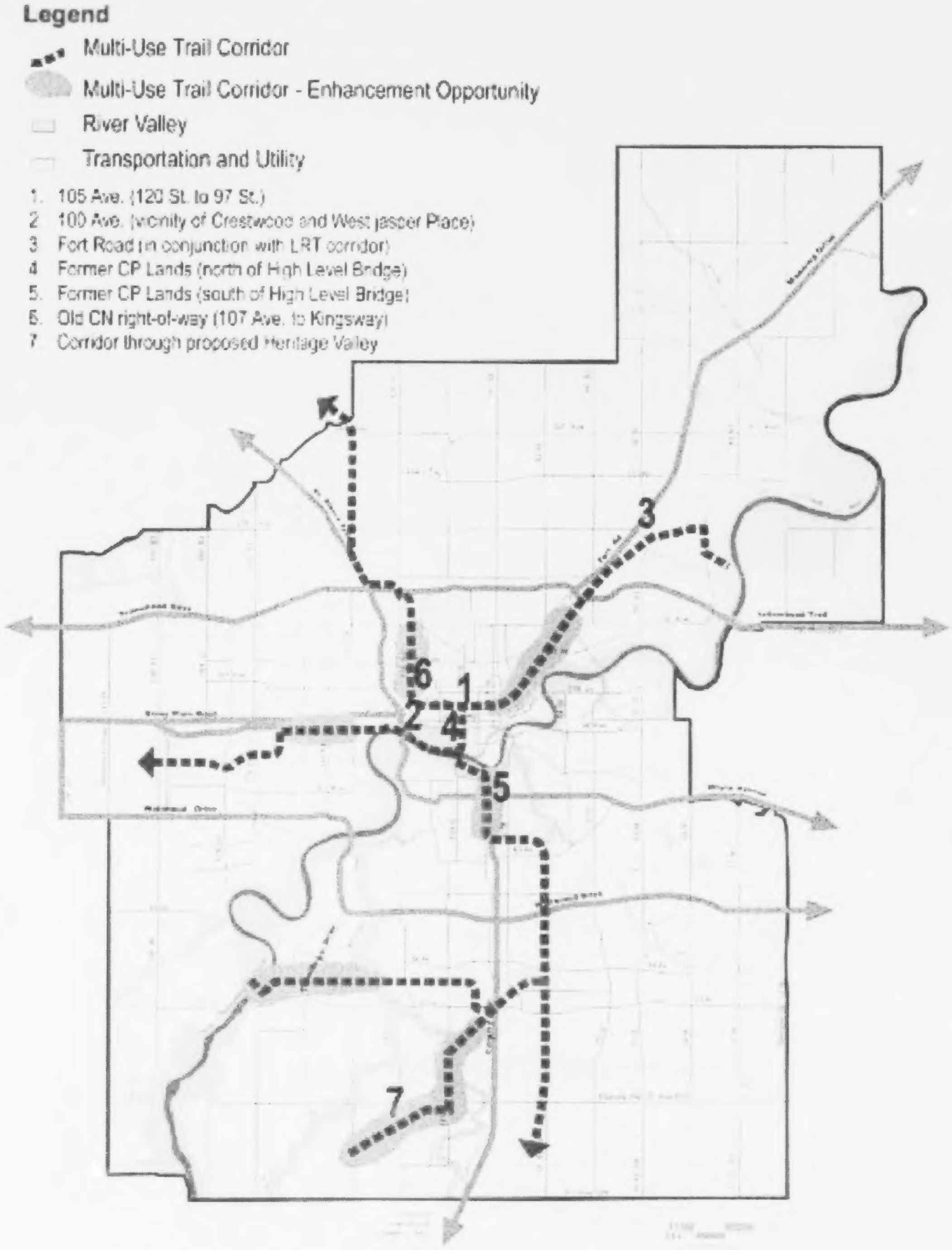
A distance of approximately 200 metres, the length of a traditional urban street block, could be the assumed area of significant influence on either side of a multi-use corridor. This distance could be used as a guide for planning and development assessment purposes.

5.0 APPLICATION

Potential locations for mixed use development adjacent to the corridors

Areas with substantial mixed use potential adjacent to existing and proposed multi-use trail corridors are identified on the following map.

Corridor and Mixed Use Development Opportunity Plan Map



Legend

▪▪▪ Multi-Use Trail Corridor

▨ Multi-Use Trail Corridor - Enhancement Opportunity

☐ River Valley

☐ Transportation and Utility

1. 105 Ave. (120 St. to 97 St.)
2. 100 Ave. (vicinity of Crestwood and West Jasper Place)
3. Fort Road (in conjunction with LRT corridor)
4. Former CP Lands (north of High Level Bridge)
5. Former CP Lands (south of High Level Bridge)
6. Old CN right-of-way (107 Ave. to Kingsway)
7. Corridor through proposed Heritage Valley

Example of potential mixed use development for a multi-use corridor

THE FOLLOWING ASSESSES THE POTENTIAL FOR MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT ALONG A MULTI-USE CORRIDOR THROUGH THE INNER-CITY AREA. MANY OF THE FINDINGS WOULD BE APPLICABLE TO OTHER CORRIDOR LOCATIONS THROUGHOUT THE CITY.

Light industry and storage lots have substantial infill development potential. Commercial uses in newer buildings would generally be compatible with mixed use residential and community uses. The often large lots means that infill redevelopment could be feasible.

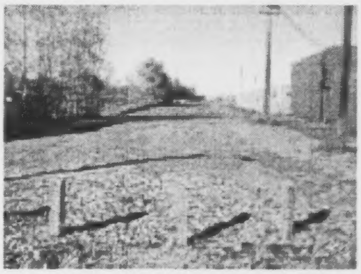
Nodes where the trail corridor crosses arterial roads have potential for pedestrian-based businesses as a local centre. A supermarket would support the increased residential population and provide local residents with the opportunity to walk for their daily shopping needs.

Good pedestrian connections to nearby arterial transit routes, retail nodes and community facilities should be ensured.

Due to the previous rail uses of the corridor, existing street crossings are limited. This forces local traffic onto the arterials, adding to congestion. Extending some local streets across the corridor may improve the connectivity for local traffic between the adjoining neighbourhoods. High quality crossings and traffic calming should be provided for these new streets.

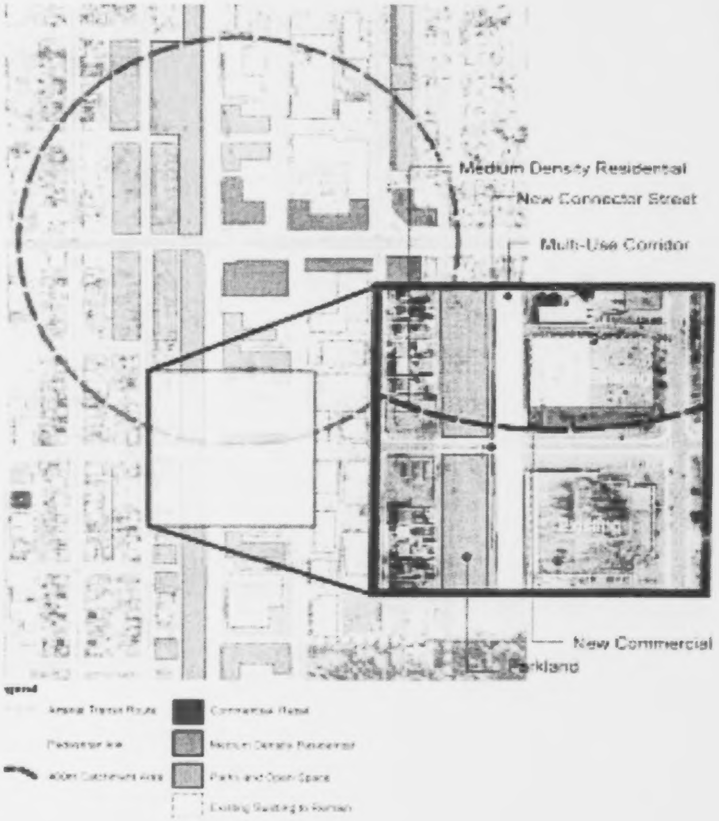
As mixed use development occurs along the edge of the corridor, public streets can be extended to the corridor to improve pedestrian access and casual surveillance.

Since the corridor is now open space, it should be integrated with adjacent parkland.



(Photo Credit: EDA Collaborative Inc.)

Older warehouse buildings adjacent to the corridor may present a good opportunity for redevelopment.


Medium Density Residential
New Connector Street
Multi-Use Corridor
New Commercial
Parkland
gend
Arterial Transit Route
Pedestrian link
400m Catchment Area
Commercial Retail
Medium Density Residential
Parks and Open Space
Existing Building to Remain

(Photo Credit: EDA *Collaborative Inc.*)

Landscape buffers created to screen previous rail uses could now be modified to provide open space integrated with the corridors.

6.0 OUTCOMES FOR STAKEHOLDERS

STAKEHOLDERS	POSITIVE OUTCOMES	NEGATIVE OUTCOMES
GENERAL COMMUNITY	Increased residential options. Environmental benefits of possible reduced car use. Health benefits from increased walking and cycling. Denser communities may increase housing supply and improve affordability.	Investment may be needed from general tax revenues to stimulate trail and mixed use development.
LOCAL COMMUNITIES	More services available in local community. More transportation choices provided. Will provide residents option to stay within their neighbourhood as their needs change. More employment may arise in the local community. New development may increase local property values. Redevelopment of obsolete industrial areas.	Higher densities and larger buildings may impact existing lower density residential areas. May affect the tax liability for property owners.
BUSINESS OWNERS AND EMPLOYEES	Provides good opportunity for home based businesses. Provides active transportation alternatives for employees. Attract new residents to city.	Change in focus away from car based development may affect some existing businesses.
DEVELOPERS	Smaller and denser residential development will facilitate supply for this market sector. Amenity of trails could help marketing of development.	Will require developers to follow different and possibly less certain processes. Developers may be required to share in the cost of improvements.
CITY	Supports the goals of well being and quality of life. Enhances transportation choice. Makes the city an attractive place for existing and new residents.	Will require staff resources and funding. Will need training in new policy to ensure practical implementation. Promotion of alternative development modes may require incentives. Will need to be negotiated with local communities.

SmartChoices
for developing our community

IDEA THREE

Walkable City

Cover Image: EDA *Collaborative Inc.*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Making Edmonton walkable requires changing walking from a recreation mode to a practical transportation alternative for accessing everyday destinations such as workplaces, shopping and community facilities.

The major elements for a successful Walkable City are a high building and population density, mixed land use, a quality public transport system, and high-quality public spaces. (1)

Smart Choice benefits of promoting walkability

Walkable communities are integral to achieving the goals of *Smart Choices* because they enhance mobility, reduce negative environmental consequences, strengthen local economies, and support stronger communities through improved social interaction. (2) Communities can be built so walking is more of a viable alternative.

Promoting walkability has many benefits related to the Smart Choices fundamentals:

OPTIONS

- provides a viable transportation alternative for local trips
- walkable neighbourhoods provide a range of pedestrian routes

VITALITY

- improved health for individuals and the related economic benefits

VIABILITY

- reduced car use and the related environmental and economic benefits
- improved sense of community and safety of public realm
- increased use of public transport; and
- contribution to sprawl reduction

ACCESS

- improves access to local facilities and services for all people

Walkability and location efficiency

Location efficiency is based on providing choice in dwelling types, environments and transportation. Walking is an alternative transportation mode. Location efficient neighbourhoods offer a wider choice and range of services than traditional settlement patterns and development forms.

Even studies casting doubt on the ability of traditional neighbourhood design to significantly reduce driving for shopping purposes (3) find that residents of walkable neighbourhoods with nearby retail value the option to walk and have chosen their residence in part because they want that option.

THIS SCENARIO EXPLORES THE OUTCOMES OF EDMONTON BECOMING A WALKABLE CITY WITH PEDESTRIAN FRIENDLY NEIGHBOURHOODS AND WALKABLE GEOGRAPHIC AREAS.

(Photo Credit: EDA Collaborative Inc.)

Whyte Ave in Old Strathcona has a high quality streetscape and interesting street level retail. The surrounding area also has a walkable grid street system and a mix of uses. It is one of Edmonton's most 'walkable' areas.

BEFORE THE MID-1900s, URBAN NEIGHBOURHOODS FOCUSED ON THE PEDESTRIAN. THEY WERE DESIGNED TO MOVE PEOPLE TO THEIR DESTINATIONS BY FOOT. IN THE PAST FIFTY YEARS, DISPERSED DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS AND SEPARATION OF LAND USES BASED ON INCREASED CAR USE HAVE LED TO AN ELIMINATION OF MANY CHARACTERISTICS OF WALKABLE COMMUNITIES. (2)

2.0 DISCUSSION

Ingredients for walkable neighbourhoods

Ingredients for creating or enhancing neighbourhoods to promote walking include:

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING

- a mix of land uses to bring homes closer to workplaces and shopping (5)
- adequate density to support mixed use
- rectilinear or grid patterns to interconnect streets (6)
- good access to public transit
- many links between neighbourhoods giving people a choice of routes from their homes to services and attractions (7)
- accessible parks to encourage pedestrian activity and social contact (4)

STREETSCAPES

- a high-quality pedestrian environment, with active building frontages, attractive paving, seating and lighting (8)
- trees as shade and separation from traffic
- public art to enhance the pedestrian experience
- low-speed streets with narrow intersections (7)
- regular, safe street crossings
- on-street parking to slow traffic and shield pedestrians (6)
- sidewalks on both sides of the street in most locations (6)
- curbs to deter parking on sidewalks (6)
- quality infrastructure such as sidewalks and ramps
- appropriate gradient and universal accessibility
- directional and interpretive signs
- activities which make walking interesting such as outdoor dining and street performers
- underground utilities

SITE AND BUILDING DESIGNS

- attractive buildings facing the street to provide interest and a sense of safety for the pedestrian, avoid blank walls along pedestrian circulation areas
- adjoining buildings for casual surveillance of the public realm from ground level and higher stories, incorporating a mix of uses helps provide around the clock activity
- parking located behind buildings with access to them through laneways, minimize driveways on the street front (6)
- minimal use of drive-thru services
- well screened waste storage areas

EASE OF ACCESS TO DAILY NEEDS IS AN IMPORTANT PRINCIPLE FOR CREATING LIVABLE NEIGHBOURHOODS.

NEIGHBOURHOODS SHOULD BE BASED ON STREET LAYOUTS THAT ALLOW MOST RESIDENTS TO LIVE WITHIN WALKING DISTANCE OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD'S CENTRE.

WALKABILITY DEMANDS BOTH A CONDUCIVE STREET PATTERN AND A SENSIBLE ARRANGEMENT OF USES. (4)

(Photo Credit: EDA Collaborative Inc.)

Quality streetscapes can increase comfort and safety of users through incorporation of street trees and on street parking

THE PROVISION OF SIDEWALKS ALONE IS NOT ENOUGH TO MAKE AN AREA WALKABLE.

PATHWAY NETWORK PLANNING AND DESIGN

- high-quality walking facilities that link major destinations such as schools, shops, workplaces and public facilities
- pedestrian access between parking lots and store entrances
- generous sidewalks with adequate lighting
- walkways accessible to people with disabilities (8)
- pedestrian priority at signaled crossings

ASSOCIATED PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

- shade and shelter for transit users
- gathering spaces and seating nodes along pedestrian routes
- clear directional signage
- interpretive signage where appropriate
- walkways that are cleared of snow in winter

Barriers to walkability

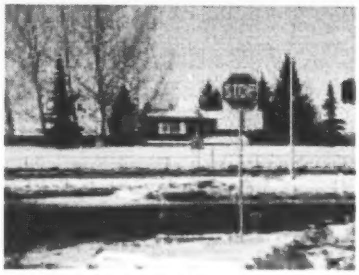
The following factors are barriers to walkability:

- Poor image of walking in relation to car-driver status
- Long distances to destinations due to lack of connectivity in street systems
- Perception of danger from traffic
- Unfavorable weather conditions
- Separation of communities by major arterial roads and railways
- Perception of reduced personal safety on streets, particularly after dark
- Poor links with public transport
- Poor quality or lack of sidewalks
- Poor site planning for pedestrian access to public buildings and businesses
- Steep slopes

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WALKABILITY AND PUBLIC TRANSIT

Efficient and safe pedestrian access makes walking to public transport nodes more attractive. Many sources suggest that transit nodes or bus stops should be provided within a five minute, 400 to 500 metre, walking distance of all homes, businesses and community facilities. For more substantial transit nodes, a walking distance of up to one kilometer could be a reasonable walkable catchment area.

For existing neighbourhoods, the walkable catchment from transit nodes defines the priority area in which to focus increased mixed use density and improved pedestrian facilities.



(Photo Credit: EDA *Collaborative Inc.*)

The design of some arterial roadways does not facilitate walkability. Berming and fencing along arterials are major pedestrian barriers.

(Photo Credit: EDA *Collaborative Inc.*)

The design of this arterial road business does not encourage pedestrian access.

(Photo Credit: EDA *Collaborative Inc.*)

Buildings should have active street frontages. Blank walls make the street unattractive and less safe for pedestrians.

(Photo Credit: EDA *Collaborative Inc.*)

Pedestrian facilities and wayfinding combined with heritage, or interpretive features make the pedetrian experience and locality more interesting.

3.0 FITTING WALKABILITY INTO EDMONTON

Edmonton generally has some very positive characteristics for pedestrians in terms of its relatively flat terrain and concentric nature of its urban development. One of the major positives for walkability, a grid street system, is common in Edmonton. This is discussed later in more detail. The following include some of the local factors which affect walkability.

(Photo Credit: EDA *Collaborative Inc.*)

The climate of a 'winter city' can be a major barrier to walkability.

(Photo Credit: EDA Collaborative Inc.)

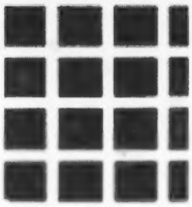
Development backing onto arterial roads and lack of cross streets reduces connectivity.

(Photo Credit: EDA Collaborative Inc.)

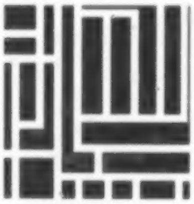
Major arterial roads can become a major barrier to pedestrian movement between neighbourhoods.

MAJOR LOCAL BARRIERS TO WALKABILITY

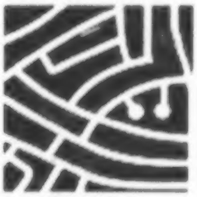
- The river valley and associated ravines are major physical barriers between the north and south sides of the river due to the steep slopes and limited number of crossings.
- Freeways, such as Whitemud Drive, Terwillegar Drive and the Yellowhead Trail prevent pedestrian crossing except at a limited number of locations.
- Arterial roadways, such as 111 Street south of Whitemud Drive, with bermed boulevards and residential development backing onto them restrict access between communities.
- Rail corridors severely restrict pedestrian travel between neighbourhoods.
- The winter climate makes walking less comfortable and less safe. Ice and snow on pathways is a deterrent to walking.
- The relatively low density of development in newer parts of the city and large size of roadways means that the walking distance between housing and services is often long.
- The configuration of streets in newer neighbourhoods and fencing of lots which back onto arterial roads make walking trips considerably longer. This situation also makes the walking experience along the arterial road less attractive and less safe because there is less casual surveillance from residences.
- There are limited numbers of street links from new subdivisions to arterial roads as these areas focus on single 'estate' entries.
- There is poor provision for pedestrians in the site planning of parking lots and retail areas. Storage of snow on site often becomes a seasonal pedestrian barrier.



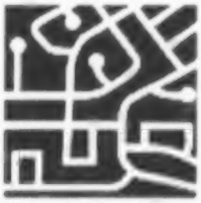
(Image Credit: CMHC)
Gridiron street pattern, circa 1900



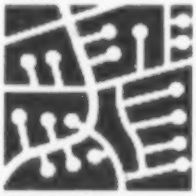
(Image Credit: CMHC)
Fragmented parallel, circa 1950



(Image Credit: CMHC)
Warped parallel street pattern, circa 1960



(Image Credit: CMHC)
Loops and lollipops, circa 1970



(Image Credit: CMHC)
Lollipops on a stick, circa 1980

ANALYSIS OF EDMONTON STREET SYSTEMS

The street pattern of a neighbourhood has a major influence on its walkability by affecting the distance people have to walk to access services and affecting their *choice* of routes. A variety of street patterns have been used and developed over the last 100 years. The evolution of street patterns generally portrays increased discontinuity, reduced connectivity and increased adaptation to the car. (4).

The following discussion reviews the positive and negative past development patterns in Edmonton in relation to walkability.

TRADITIONAL TOWN CENTRES AND INNER CITY FRINGE

The majority of the downtown core, Old Strathcona and adjoining neighbourhoods were laid out using a **grid** pattern with minor modifications to accommodate geographic barriers such as the river valley and ravines.

A number of significant radial streets, such as Fort Road, Kingsway and St. Albert Trail, transverse this grid. They reflected major historical travel routes and create an interesting 'dynamic' against the **grid**.

The structure of Edmonton's older precincts provides good connectivity for walking. These neighbourhoods generally have a diverse mix of land uses. Grid systems with a mix of uses provide good walkability.

The 'fringe' to the inner-city, including suburbs such as Parkview and Idylwylde, supports primarily residential land uses based around **fragmented parallel** street patterning. This is still relatively efficient for pedestrians, although the longer block lengths and offset streets increase the length of many trips. Laneways are still generally found in these neighbourhoods.

MATURE SUBURBS

Mature neighbourhoods with **warped parallel** street patterns on the outskirts of the inner-city still have residences and businesses fronting the streets, including arterials. This is often achieved with service roads, as evident along 106 Avenue in Capilano and 137 Avenue in Londonderry. They also have streets lining open space, so houses fronting the streets overlook the parkland.

Walkability in these neighbourhoods is somewhat less efficient because of the curving streets, longer blocks, offset streets and lack of mixed use.

NEWER SUBURBS

The **loop** street pattern has been extensively used throughout newer parts of Edmonton, particularly in many neighbourhoods in Millwoods. This layout still incorporates multiple access points into the neighbourhood yet often has development backing onto arterial roadways, making them pedestrian hostile. There is a strong reliance on narrow pedestrian rights of way to make up for the reduced number of connecting streets. These can create safety problems.

Lollipops on a stick street patterns are typically found in the newer neighbourhoods at the edge of the city. A feature of this layout is the increased reliance on collector roads and restricted access points via 'estate entries' to adjoining arterial roads. This limits the options for both vehicles and pedestrians.

These neighbourhoods often have development backing onto arterial roadways, making them pedestrian hostile. The size of the arterial roadways sometimes approaches 'freeway' status, creating a major obstacle to the movement of vehicles and pedestrians between neighbourhoods.

The discontinuity of this street pattern inhibits pedestrian access to facilities and transit stops while their curvilinear alignment lengthens walking trips and makes them confusing. The narrow walkways provided at the end of culs-de-sac to link streets can often become safety problems. The configuration limits surveillance opportunities and escape options. Collector and arterial streets associated with this layout become inhospitable and unsafe because of their high traffic volumes, making travel on foot unpleasant and undesirable. (4)

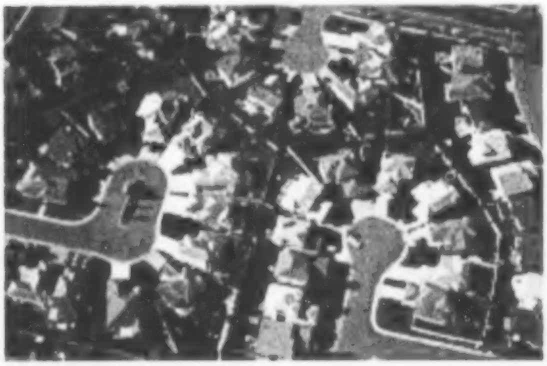
THE CURVILINEAR STREETS OF NEWER SUBDIVISIONS HAVE BEEN FULLY ADAPTED TO THE CAR AND TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT. THIS LIMITS TRAFFIC AT THE LOCAL STREET VIA USE OF CUL-DE-SACS AND PERMITS GOOD FLOW OF TRAFFIC AT THE COLLECTOR AND ARTERIAL LEVELS. (4)

THE USE OF CUL-DE-SACS DECREASES TRAFFIC VOLUMES IN LOCAL STREETS AND OFFER THE POTENTIAL FOR GREATER SOCIABILITY, PARTICULARLY WITH REGARD TO CHILDREN'S SAFETY AND PLAY.

NEO-TRADITIONAL SUBURBS

A street pattern layout based on the fragmented and warped parallel system and incorporating new urbanism principles has been used in a number of new developments, such as Terwillegar Towne.

There are, however, a very limited number of neighbourhood access points. This system may increase connectivity within the neighbourhood but does not facilitate linkage to adjoining neighbourhoods.



(Photo Credit: City of Edmonton)

Cul-de-sacs increase pedestrian travel distance. Friends in these adjoining culs-de-sac would have a long walk via the street system to visit each other.

(Photo Credit: EDA Collaborative Inc.)

Even though they often have quality pedestrian facilities, residential estate entries limit the points of entry and exit for cars and pedestrians, restricting movement between neighbourhoods.

4.0 IMPLEMENTATION

The following is a list of strategies and actions which the City of Edmonton could consider to promote walkability:

POLICY AND PLANNING

- Adopt a Walkability 'policy' for new development.
- Prepare a citywide master plan for pedestrian facilities, creating a hierarchy of routes and facilities. Utilize the linkage priorities identified in the Application section of this chapter.
- Prepare local area linkage plans for existing and new neighbourhoods to determine where the primary pedestrian routes should be. Prioritize development and/or replacement of pedestrian facilities and funding based on this plan. The outcome may include a range of pedestrian facilities to suit the local demand.
- Plan mixed use intensification for the areas of the city with the most potential, as suggested in the Application section of this chapter.
- Consider application of the Pedestrian Commercial Shopping Street Overlay to more commercial districts of the city. This development guide has many of the requirments to improve walkability.

URBAN DESIGN

- Design guidelines. Develop pedestrian planning, design and maintenance guidelines to promote pedestrian mobility. Integrate these with roadway design guidelines for use with both City and private development projects. Reconsider the function of arterial roads; their mixed use potential should be maximized and pedestrian friendliness improved.
- Subdivision design should not allow residences to back onto arterials.
- Avoid unsafe walkways at the ends of culs-de-sac. Use an interconnected street system instead.
- Require that commercial and public building site plans are walkable. (2)
- Provide access for people with disabilities to sidewalks, streets, parks and major services. (2)

FINANCING AND LAND AQUISITION

- Consider developing contribution plans so that all development contributes towards walkability infrastructure.
- Provide for pocket or neighbourhood parks as part of new development. Dedicate new public right-of-ways and parklands to bridge gaps in pedestrian network. (11)
- May be necessary to fund a substantial amount of upgraded pedestrian facilities through local improvement charges and general taxation.
- Consider application of the Retail and Commercial Façade and Storefront Improvement Program to other commercial districts.

EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

- Events and actions. Initiate activities to promote demonstration projects and increase walking.

(Photos Credit: EDA Collaborative Inc)

Edmonton's Retail and Commercial Façade and Storefront Improvement Program is improving the streetscapes of the downtown.

(Photos Credit: EDA Collaborative Inc.)

Edmonton's Pedestrian Commercial Shopping Street Overlay provides good controls for the promotion of pedestrian oriented development

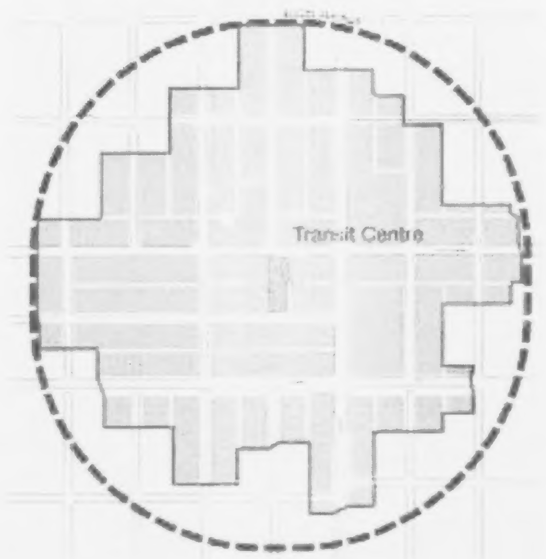
Walkable catchments and Pedsheds: A planning tool

It is generally accepted that a typical pedestrian could walk between 400 and 500 metres in five minutes. This distance needs to be measured along the actual route and not 'as the crow flies'. A larger walkable catchment is often used for larger urban centers or major public transport nodes such as railway stations. This size of this catchment is generally based on a 10 minute walk which equates roughly 800 metres.

Walkable catchments or pedsheds measure the actual area accessible within a five to ten minute walking distance as a percentage of the theoretical or 'as the crow flies' walking distance. The analysis below gives a graphic display of an area's walkability. The resulting percentage indicates the ease of pedestrian movement through an urban area to access specific neighbourhood destinations. **Pedshed mapping can be used to analyse the walkability of existing centres to determine where to make changes to the street network, or analyse proposed street networks to help maximize walkability.** (13)

Pedsheds and Walkability

EACH OF THE DRAWINGS BELOW REPRESENTS AREAS ACCESSIBLE BY FOOT WITHIN A 400M OR 5 MINUTE WALK (BLUE SHADED AREAS). NOTE THE DIFFERENCES IN WALKABILITY OF THE 2 DEVELOPMENT PATERNS, DESPITE BEING WITHIN THE 400M 'AS THE CROW FLIES' CATCHMENT AREA.



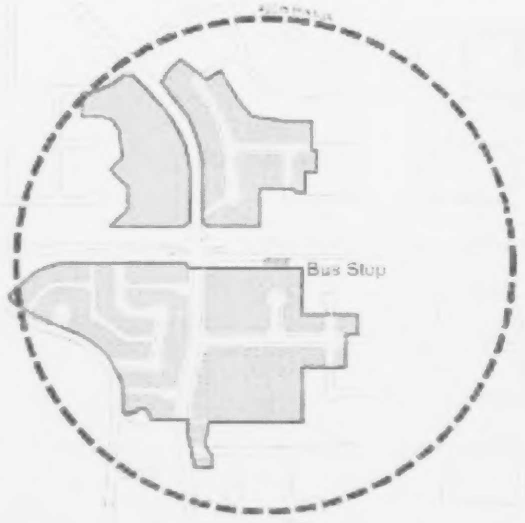
Legend

▬ ▬ 400 metres

☐ Walkable catchment along actual route.

(Photo Credit: EDA *Collaborative Inc.*)

43% of the catchment around this transit node is within a 400m walk due to the well connected street system.



Legend

▬ ▬ 400 metres

☐ Walkable catchment along actual route.

(Photo Credit: EDA Collaborative Inc.)

Only 25% of the catchment around this bus stop is within a 400m walk due to cul-de-sacs and fencing along the arterial.

'THE MAJOR DEMAND FOR WALKABLE HOUSING ENVIRONMENTS HAS BEEN SATISFIED IN THE PAST BY OLDER NEIGHBOURHOODS BUILT BEFORE 1950, BUT THOSE OLDER ALTERNATIVES ARE BECOMING A SMALLER PROPORTION OF THE TOTAL HOUSING STOCK EACH DECADE. (12)

(Photos Credit: City of Edmonton)

The inner city neighbourhoods have good walkability ingredients and high potential for mixed use intensification.

(Photos Credit: City of Edmonton

Mature suburbs generally have good walkable structure but lack a mix of uses and the density to support this.

(Photos Credit: City of Edmonton)

Newer suburbs with less walkable street structure and lack of mixed uses have less opportunity for change in the short term.

5.0 APPLICATION

The following summary suggests how the principles of walkability could be applied to the major precincts of Edmonton.

Traditional Town Centres

Downtown and Old Strathcona have a high density and range of uses as well as good street structure and good access to transit. The residential population of the downtown is increasing to create a better balance of uses. Pedestrian activity, especially around the fringes of the downtown, is increasing as a result. The building character downtown and its impact on the streetscape limits the pedestrian experience. Improvements to existing buildings and pedestrian facilities in this area would further enhance its walkability, as would an increase in residential use.

The Old Strathcona area is a good example of a walkable neighbourhood due to its good street structure, mix of uses, building character and quality of its streetscapes. The 'liveliness' of its streets adds another dimension to walking in this area. The area also has relatively good access to transit.

Inner-City fringe

The older parts of Edmonton are generally efficiently structured for pedestrians, with grid or rectilinear street systems. The main need in these areas is to maintain or enhance existing facilities, especially in precincts with high use and with a higher residential density. Providing a greater range of uses and improved access to transit would assist walkability.

It would be beneficial to promote walking as a transportation mode in areas with high potential for transit and existing mixed use. It would also help to improve walking facilities linking neighbourhood supermarkets and convenience stores, as these are regular, if not daily, destinations. This may in turn ensure the economic health of these local centres.

Mature suburbs

The traditional suburbs surrounding the inner-city fringe generally have reasonable street structures and access to transit. Their predominantly residential character makes them less walkable for access to services and there is often a dependence on shopping malls. There is potential to improve walkability through allowance of a greater range of uses, especially along arterial roadways, and an upgrading of pedestrian facilities to existing local services.

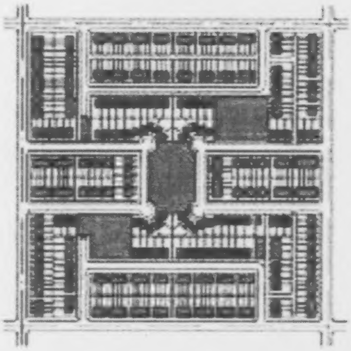
Newer suburbs

The newer neighbourhoods with 'spaghetti' collector roads and 'lollipop' local streets are least efficient for pedestrians. They also may be hard to retrofit considering land ownership and lack of mixed use. Walking is mostly recreational. Some newer suburbs also have limited access to transit; further restricting their walkability. The best opportunity lies with making new development mixed use and interconnected with surroundings.

Future neighbourhoods

Future neighbourhoods should be planned using the principles of location efficiency and incorporating the ingredients for walkability. Some areas, such as Heritage Valley in Edmonton's south, are already attempting to apply these principles. The model for new neighbourhood street patterning developed by Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation may be a useful example. A more pedestrian and vehicle permeable neighbourhood structure should be considered for major transit nodes and urban centres and less vehicle permeable structures, with a mix of grid and culs-de-sac, for surroundings. This would reduce fears of increased traffic through lower density areas.

Use of pedshed analysis should help with the assessment process to determine the walkability of development proposals.



Model for new neighbourhoods developed by Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation.
Source: CMHC

Walkability linkage priorities

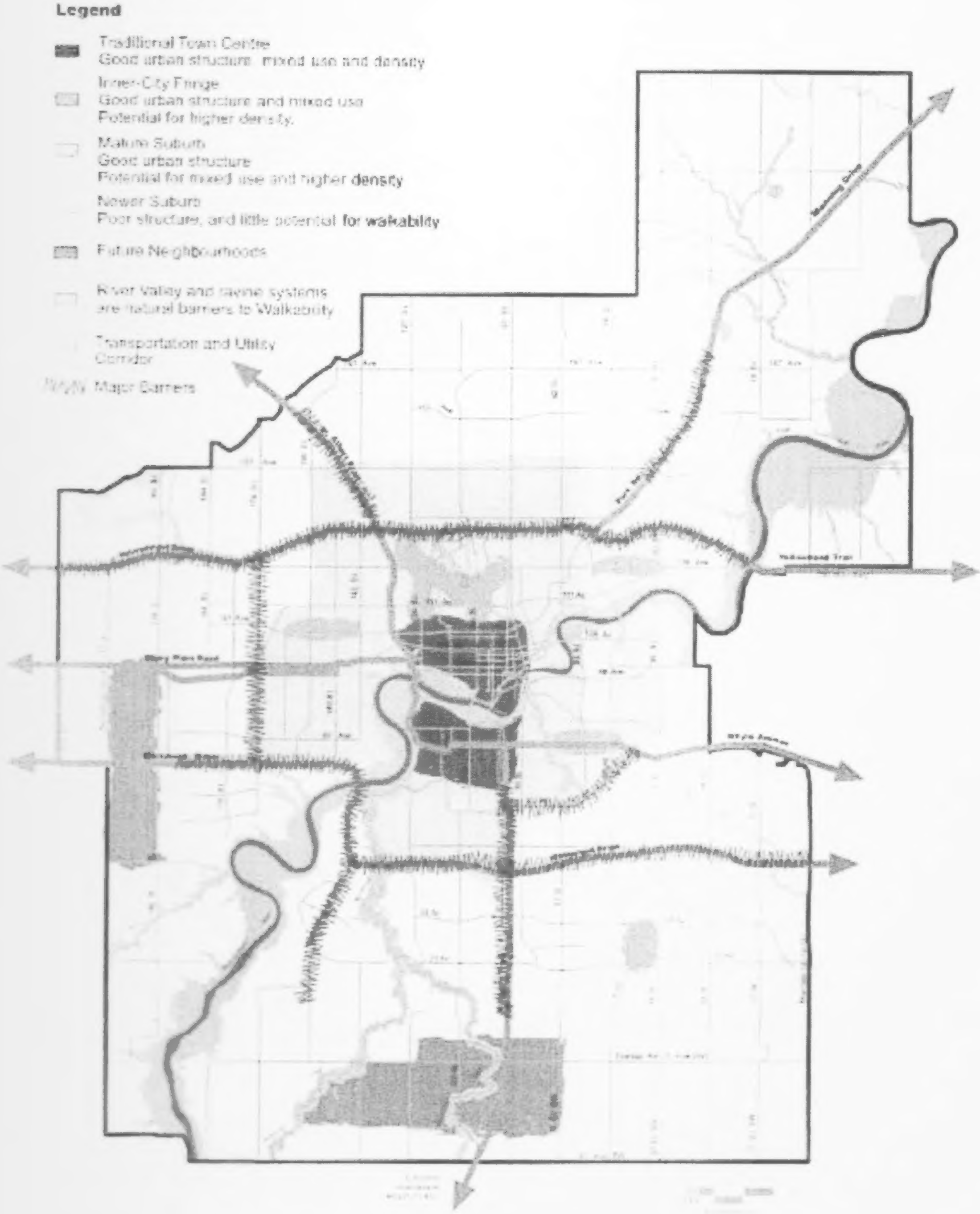
The following are major linkage strategies to support the overall improvement of walkability in Edmonton. The strategies build on the city's major destinations and existing infrastructure. Priority should be given to providing new or enhanced pedestrian linkages to:

- major institutional destinations such as Grant McEwan College, University of Alberta, and large schools
- local neighbourhood centres, supermarkets and convenience stores
- LRT stations and transit nodes
- higher density residential areas, especially those within proximity of downtown and district centres
- multi-use corridors, which then provide access throughout the city
- river crossings to improve linkage between neighbourhoods and the river valley recreational facilities

(Image Credit: City of Edmonton)

A Linkage Masterplan for the city will assist prioritisation of walkability infrastructure. This should be closely linked with planning for mixed use intensification.

Walkability Concept Map



Legend

▨ Traditional Town Centre
Good urban structure, mixed use and density

▨ Inner-City Fringe
Good urban structure and mixed use
Potential for higher density.

☐ Mature Suburb
Good urban structure
Potential for mixed use and higher density

Newer Suburb
Poor structure, and little potential for walkability

▨ Future Neighbourhoods

☐ River Valley and ravine systems
are natural barriers to Walkability

Transportation and Utility
Corridor

Major Barriers

(Image Credit: EDA Collaborative Inc.)

6.0 OUTCOMES FOR STAKEHOLDERS

STAKEHOLDERS	POSITIVE OUTCOMES	NEGATIVE OUTCOMES
GENERAL COMMUNITY	Provides increased mobility. Environmental benefits of possible reduced car use. Potential health benefits.	Substantial amount of required infrastructure may be difficult to fund and maintain.
LOCAL COMMUNITIES	Improved access to, and ability to fulfil daily needs. More employment opportunities may arise in the local community. Improvements to neighbourhood sociability. Improved access to transit. Affordability of transportation.	May be necessary to fund significant portion of upgraded pedestrian facilities through local improvement charges and general taxation.
BUSINESS OWNERS AND EMPLOYEES	Supports local businesses. Provides alternative access for employees. Improved employee health through increased walking may increase productivity.	Possible change in focus away from car based development may affect viability of some existing businesses. May be necessary to fund upgraded pedestrian facilities through local improvement charges.
DEVELOPERS	Walkable neighbourhoods are becoming increasingly marketable.	New planning and design requirements will require developers to follow different and possibly less certain processes. Developers may need to provide higher quantity and quality of pedestrian infrastructure.
CITY	Supports goals of well-being and quaility of life. Could help to relieve potential traffic problems. Improved livability makes the City an attractive place for existing and new residents and supports City's viability in comparison to other cities. Supports use of existing transit service.	New planning and design policy will require staff resources and funding for infrastructure. Staff will need training in the new policy to ensure practical implementation.

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for developing our community

IDEA FOUR

Small Scale Ground Oriented Residential infill

IBI
GROUP

Cover Image
Rendering of Residential Infill: IBI Group

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Small scale ground oriented residential development offers viable intensification and reinvestment options for Edmonton's inner city, mature neighbourhoods, and newer suburban communities. This scenario has been prepared to explore options to encourage sensitive small scale infill or new development.

Infill development can be defined as development that fills in the gaps in existing neighbourhoods. For the Edmonton context, small-scale residential infill ranges from

- development on a single lot where a property owner adds a secondary suite to accommodate an elderly parent or university aged child, or gain some revenue,
- duplex,
- triplex,
- fourplex,
- a series of lots with single family housing, or
- up to 8 units of townhouse development.

New suburban areas are planned and built in large land blocks and are not the target for this small scale infill discussion, although where remnant blocks of land are left vacant in new neighbourhoods, small scale ground oriented development could occur.

D. Hunneman: **Single Family**

D. Hunneman: **Duplex**

D. Hunneman: **Triplex**

I.Lewis: **Fourplex**

D. Hunneman: **Townhouses**

1.0 INTRODUCTION con't

The concept of small scale ground oriented residential development envelops the idea of housing units that make sense in Edmonton's mature and suburban neighbourhoods by adding housing units and providing housing choices. Small scale residential infill development is a smart choice as it meets the four fundamentals of Smart Choices – Options, Vitality, Viability and Access.

OPTIONS

- Small scale residential infill offers different housing options for city residents within existing neighbourhoods.
- It provides opportunities for residents to choose different modes of transportation, have shorter commute times and distances travelled by providing housing options closer to where they work and shop.

VITALITY

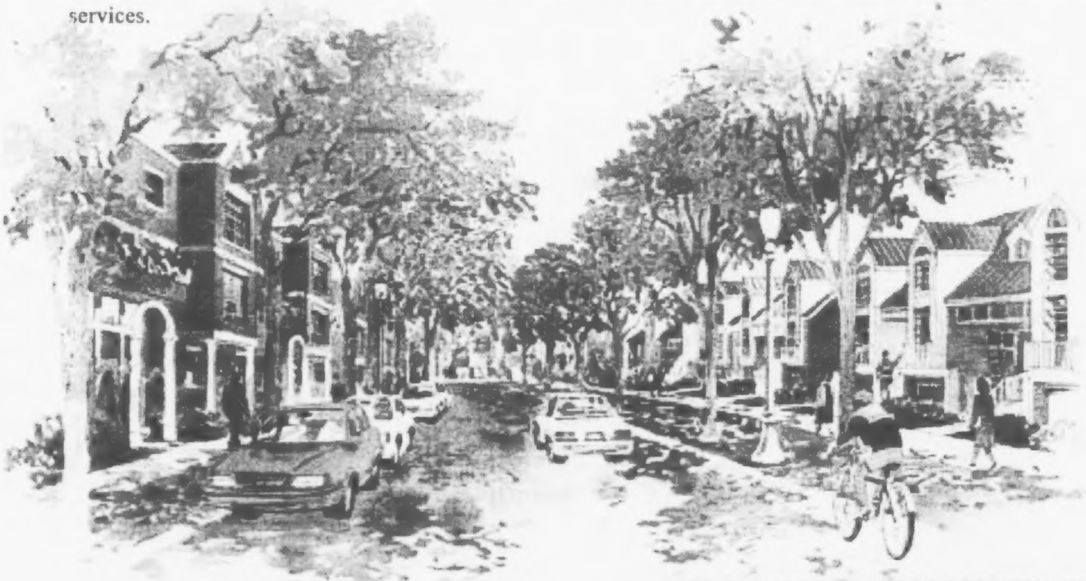
- Residents of small scale residential infill development have the option for more social interaction as more people in a neighbourhood make for a more vital neighbourhood.
- More people in the neighbourhood will better support commercial establishments, potentially resulting in a more vibrant community.
- More people living in closer proximity to daily activities will likely result in less vehicle travel, thus benefiting the environment by less air and water pollution. This creates a more vital, healthy city.

VIABILITY

- Small scale residential infill provides homeowners the opportunity to reinvest in their property by building a suite and gaining revenue.
- It provides developers the opportunity to reinvest in Edmonton's communities.
- Small scale residential infill better utilizes infrastructure including storm and sanitary lines, power and telephone, and gas connections. Utilizing existing infrastructure can result in more viable development projects.

ACCESS

- Small scale residential infill housing results in more residents in existing neighbourhoods. These residents will have access to services such as schools, libraries, parks and open space as well as existing fire and police services.



IBI Group: Rendering on Small Scale Infill Development

2.0 DISCUSSION

Why does Edmonton Need Small Scale Residential Infill Development?

The City of Edmonton estimates that approximately 140,000 people will move to Edmonton over the next 20 years as 100,000 new jobs are created in the city. The greatest increase in growth is expected in people age 50 and over, with the second largest increase expected for people in their 20s. As well, Edmonton's many post secondary schools including the University of Alberta, NAIT, Grant MacEwan, and community colleges and computer institutes continue to attract people to the city. Housing options will be increasingly important as Edmonton's population and household makeup continues to change, and more students attend post secondary institutions. All these Edmontonians will require a variety of housing options including apartments, their first homes, appropriate retirement housing, and housing that meets the needs of empty nesters.

Conventional Small Scale Housing

The following conventional housing options, both for existing development and new development, are currently used within Edmonton.

D. Hunneman: **Granny Suite Over Garage**

Existing Development

Existing development refers to an existing house on a lot that may accommodate a secondary suite.

EXISTING BUILDINGS/LOTS

- Small scale infill housing can be in the form of secondary suites such as a basement suite or a suite over a detached garage.
- As well, a suite may be accommodated in a separate building called a modular unit or granny suite.
- A residential suite over an existing or new commercial establishment allows the option to work and live in the same location.

D. Hunneman:
Residence Over Commerical Space

AGING, OBSOLETE OR DILAPIDATED BUILDING

- These types of buildings offer a good opportunity for infill development, and may be torn down to accommodate another single family house, a duplex, and triplex or fourplex, if the lot size is sufficient.

D. Hunneman: **Older Housing**

2.0 DISCUSSION con't

New Development

New development is residential small scale construction on a vacant lot or a series of lots.

VACANT LOT

- On a vacant lot, small scale infill housing can take the form of a duplex or triplex, and in some cases, if the lot is large enough, a fourplex.

NEW BUILDINGS ON A SERIES OF LOTS

- A developer may choose to build single family houses or a series of townhouses on a number of lots.

ZERO LOT LINE DEVELOPMENT

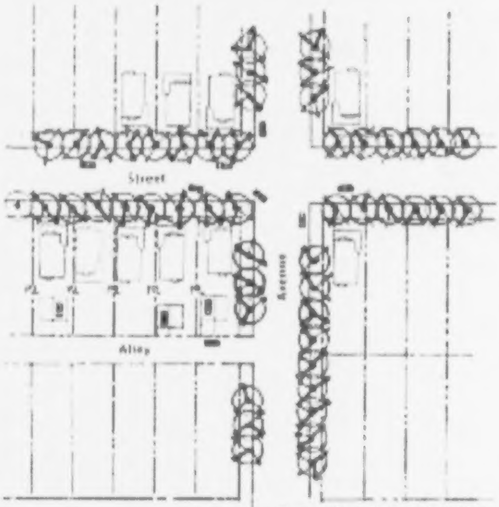
- Zero lot line development situates a house on one of the side lot lines, or sometimes on the rear or front lot line, to maximize available yard space. Houses placed on one of the side lot lines doubles the amount of useable space on the other side. This type of development is allowed in the RPL Zone (Residential Planned Lot) of Edmonton's Zoning Bylaw, and may offer options for interesting small scale infill design in existing neighbourhoods.

Non-Conventional Housing Options

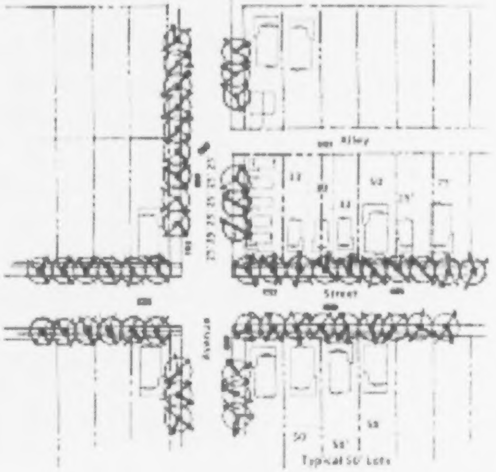
VARYING SUBDIVISION DESIGN

- In many of Edmonton's older communities, the target neighbourhoods for this discussion, the lots were designed with 50' widths. These 50' lots can be subdivided into other configurations such as subdividing a 50' lot into two 25' lots; or two 50' foot lots divided into a 75' lot and a 25' lot, or into three 33' wide lots. These varying lot widths offer building size and placement options, and may allow more property ownership and affordable housing for Edmonton.

D. Hunneman: **New Development on Vacant Lots**



IBI Group: **Example of Zero Lot Line Development**



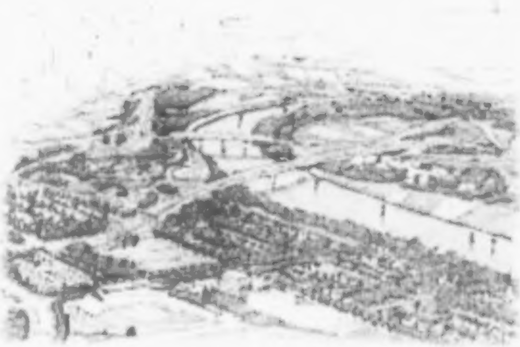
IBI Group: **Varying Subdivision Design**

D. Hunneman: **Infill Houses**

2.0 DISCUSSION con't

RIVERBOAT COMMUNITY

- A riverboat community situated on the river adjacent to one of Edmonton's river valley communities could offer an infill housing option in a unique way. Edmonton is sometimes referred to as 'River City' and a riverboat community would enhance this image. Houseboats could be sited adjacent to existing services, and would allow more people to live in the river valley. As the people in these communities would reside in the valley, they would add a sense of security to the parks and trails systems in the valley.



IBI Group: **Rendering of River Valley**

Obstacles to Development

Small scale infill development is occurring in Edmonton, however there are a number of obstacles that affect Edmonton's ability to implement infill in existing neighbourhoods in a progressive way.

Community Reaction

- Generally, people do not like change and often fear the unknown. Adjacent homeowners fear reduced parking, inconvenience and traffic congestion during construction, increased density, displacement of a neighbour, and lack of compatibility with their home or street. If people are fearful of a project they may choose to protest against it, which can be a barrier to project acceptance, even for a small scale project.

D. Hunneman:
Large Scale Infill in Single Family Neighbourhood

Contaminated Sites

- A site contaminated by a previous use such as a gas station or drycleaner will require environmental assessment and potential clean up. Often these sites are on corner lots adjacent to existing residential uses. These lots could accommodate a couple of townhouses, or be used again for a single family house, but the assessment and testing add time and costs to the construction of the housing units.

D. Hunneman: **Old Gas Station Site**

Zoning Bylaw

- The Zoning Bylaw specifies the number of stalls per unit. This can limit the number of units that can be incorporated on a site.
- The Zoning Bylaw regulates lot coverage and setbacks. This can restrict the size and number of units allowed on a site.

3.0 FITTING INTO EDMONTON NEIGHBOURHOODS

Small scale infill development is a good option for Edmonton as it will add housing that meets the needs of city residents. Some design elements that are part of quality small scale infill are:

Existing Development

SECONDARY SUITES

- A secondary suite, such as a basement suite, should occupy 50% or less of the total building square footage.
- A suite over a detached garage should be a single storey only.
- residential suite over an existing commercial establishment should be a single storey.

MODULAR UNITS

- The size of modular units, such as a granny suite, should range between 500 and 800 square feet.
- The height of a modular unit should be no greater than the primary building.

PARKING

- Parking for suites and modular units should be accommodated on site when possible.

New Development

RELATIONSHIP TO THE STREET

- Entrances should be designed to face the street directly, as is typical in Edmonton.
- Porches and verandahs may be incorporated into the unit design when used on the rest of the street.
- Front setbacks should be similar to existing setbacks on the street to provide a consistent look to the street.

LOTTING PATTERN

- Infill development can be accommodated on typical lots within neighbourhoods designed on the traditional grid pattern or cul-de-sac layout. Lots on corners and with alleys will accommodate infill development.

STREET TYPE

- New development can be accommodated on local, collector, or arterial roads, as existing development in Edmonton does today.

I. Lewis: **Single Family Infill**

D. Hunneman: **Single Family Infill**

I. Lewis: **Rear Parking at a Fourplex**

PARKING

- Parking should provide adequate stalls for all residents of the units.

BUILDING MASSING / DESIGN

- Housing units that match the size and style of the existing units should be utilized when possible.
- Height limits on small scale infill of up to 21/2 stories will fit with most Edmonton neighbourhoods.

3.0 FITTING INTO EDMONTON NEIGHBOURHOODS con't

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Existing trees on individual lots should be preserved when possible, as many of Edmonton's mature neighbourhoods are defined by their stately trees.

FAÇADE TREATMENT

- Door and window treatment should fit with other houses on the street where possible. Façade materials should match or complement existing materials on the street.

PRIVACY ISSUES

- With increased people in an area, privacy issues can arise. Windows should be located to limit views into other windows.
- Private open space should be included for all residents.

IBI Group: **Duplex Infill Housing**

D. Hunneman: **Single Family Housing**

4. 0 IMPLEMENTATION

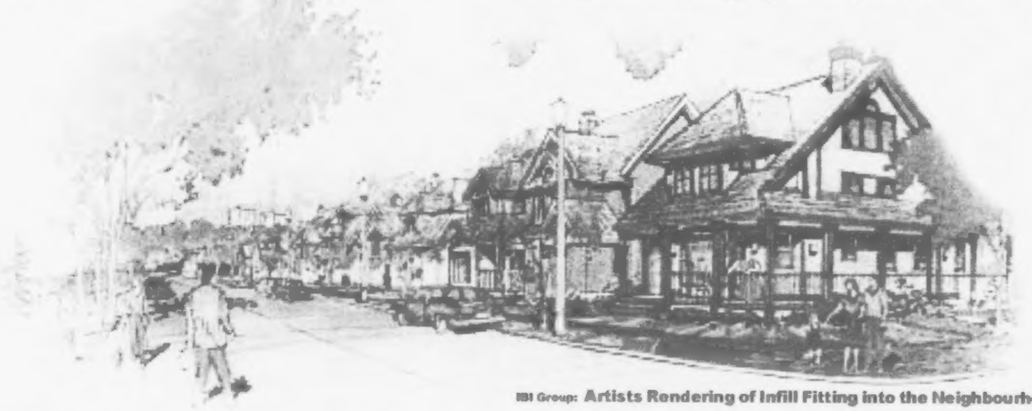
Implementation of small scale infill residential development will require:

1. City Council Support

Generally, successful small scale residential infill development hinges on support and promotion by City Council and the Administration. Support can be demonstrated through providing clear direction in statutory planning documents such as Plan Edmonton, the Zoning Bylaw, and Area Redevelopment Plans.

2. Zoning Bylaw Changes

Consideration should be given to relaxation of parking requirements, lot coverage and building setback as set out in the Zoning Bylaw. This can be determined on a site-by-site, project-by-project basis, depending on the intended occupants, proximity to transit services and day-to-day activities such as shopping, schools, libraries etc.



IBI Group: **Artists Rendering of Infill Fitting into the Neighbourhood**

4. 0 IMPLEMENTATION con't

3. Educating the Community

By providing clear and easy-to-understand promotional and educational materials, the City Administration can assist homeowners and the community in better understanding the permitting process and development requirements. A better understanding will result in better small scale projects.

4. Clean up of Potentially Contaminated Sites

As discussed, some corner lots adjacent to existing residential blocks of land may have accommodated uses such as gas stations or dry cleaners, and if not contaminated could offer opportunities for small scale residential development. The City could work with other levels of government to offset the cost of redeveloping contaminated sites.

5. Design Considerations

Homeowners should ensure that their infill projects match the size and scale of buildings on the street, and have façade treatment including entrances and windows facing the street. Porches and verandahs may be incorporated when typically used in the neighbourhood.

When developers are incorporating a small scale single family housing or townhouse development into an existing neighbourhood, they should ensure the massing of the project fits with the scale and size of the existing neighbourhood, and that the units are designed to relate to the street through the use of street facing entrances, windows, porches or verandahs.

For both homeowners and developer projects parking should be accommodated on site to lessen the impact of congestion on the street. A reduction of parking requirements may be considered at development permit stage if requested by the applicant and services such as transit and bike paths are near.

D. Hunneman: **Infill development**

D.Hunneman: **Infill in a Neighbourhood**

5.0 APPLICATION

Generally, small scale residential infill development can occur in existing houses or on their lots (such as secondary suites), on a vacant lot or lots, or parcels with deteriorating housing stock. To ensure the best possible fit into Edmonton's existing fabric, it is recommended that the types of small scale residential infill development discussed here be applied in the following locations:

TYPICAL LOT ON A STREET WITH AN ALLEY

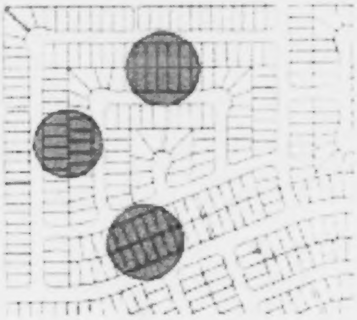
- Secondary Suites
- Duplex, Triplex and Fourplex Housing
- Varying Subdivision Design
- Zero lot line development

IBI Group: **Typical lot on street with Alley**

5.0 APPLICATION con't

TYPICAL LOT ON A STREET WITHOUT AN ALLEY

- Secondary Suites
- Duplex
- Varying Subdivision Design
- Zero lot line development



IBI Group: Typical lot on a Street without an Alley

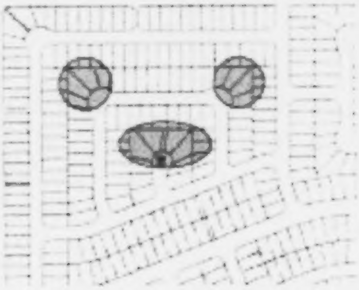
CORNER LOT WITH ALLEY

- Secondary Suites
- Duplex, Triplex, and Fourplex Housing
- Varying Subdivision Design
- Zero lot line development

IBI Group: Corner Lot with Alley

CORNER LOT WITHOUT ALLEY

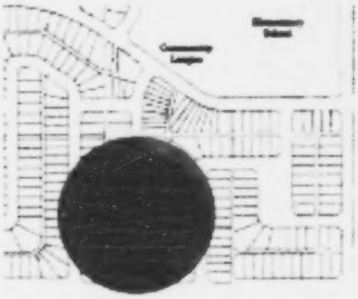
- Secondary Suites
- Duplex
- Zero lot line development



IBI Group: Corner Lot without an Alley

AN ASSEMBLY OF LOTS

- Single Family Housing with or without an accessory suite
- Townhouse Developments
- Triplex and Fourplex Housing
- Varying Subdivision Design
- Zero lot line development



IBI Group: An Assembly of Lots

6.0 OUTCOMES

Small scale residential infill development in Edmonton's mature and suburban neighbourhoods will result in both positive and negative outcomes.

AFFECTED STAKEHOLERS	POSITIVE OUTCOMES	NEGATIVE OUTCOMES
Property Owners	• Opportunity to house elderly relative or university aged student on the property. • Opportunity to generate additional income.	• Loss of private open space. • Potential parking problems.
Development Industry	• More choices in sites to develop. • Can be part of the community revitalization process.	• Success of individual property owner in the small scale market may impact the development market for medium density infill development.
Community/Neighbourhood Residents	• Use of existing infrastructure and services • Revitalization of community through replacement of aging /obsolete building and investment of property owners in their housing. • Affordable housing in immediate neighbourhood. • More people in the neighbourhood creates potential for safer neighbourhoods (more eyes on the street).	• Potential for traffic, parking conflicts.
The City of Edmonton	• More efficient use of existing infrastructure and services. • Potentially less tax dollars required for new infrastructure. • More property tax revenue.	• Pressure from increased use of infrastructure and services.

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IDEA FIVE

Medium Density Residential Infill

IBI
GROUP

Cover Image:

IBI Group: Rendering of Mixed Use Medium Density Development

1.0 INTRODUCTION

A. Lewis: **Townhouse Development**

D. Hunneman: **Walk Up Apartment Complex**

D. Hunneman: **Apartments 4-8 Stories High**

Medium density residential infill development is occurring throughout Edmonton in both mature neighbourhoods and older suburban areas. This scenario has been prepared to explore options to encourage medium density residential infill or new development, identifying appropriate locations and parameters for this type of development, and current barriers or obstacles to development.

For Edmonton medium density infill development includes:

- townhouse development to a height of 2 ½ stories with more than 8 units,
- walk up apartments,
- apartments 4 - 8 stories high, and
- mixed use development designed with commercial and/or recreational uses.

The market is strong for medium density housing and will continue to be in demand as Edmonton's population ages, household makeup changes immigrants arrive, and post secondary institutions expand. This ever growing group of residents will look for housing that is accessible, affordable, comfortable, and requires less maintenance and upkeep.

IBI Group: **Rendering of Mixed Use Development**

1.0 INTRODUCTION con't

Medium density is a smart choice as it will help Edmonton continue to be a vibrant, viable, and sustainable community. Further it meets the four fundamentals of Smart Choice – Options, Vitality, Viability and Access.

Options

- Medium density residential infill offers housing options for city residents within existing communities.
- Provides developers the opportunity to reinvest in, and contribute to the revitalization of existing neighbourhoods.
- By living closer to where they work and carry on daily activities, residents have the option to walk, cycle or use transit to reach their employment and amenity needs.

Vitality

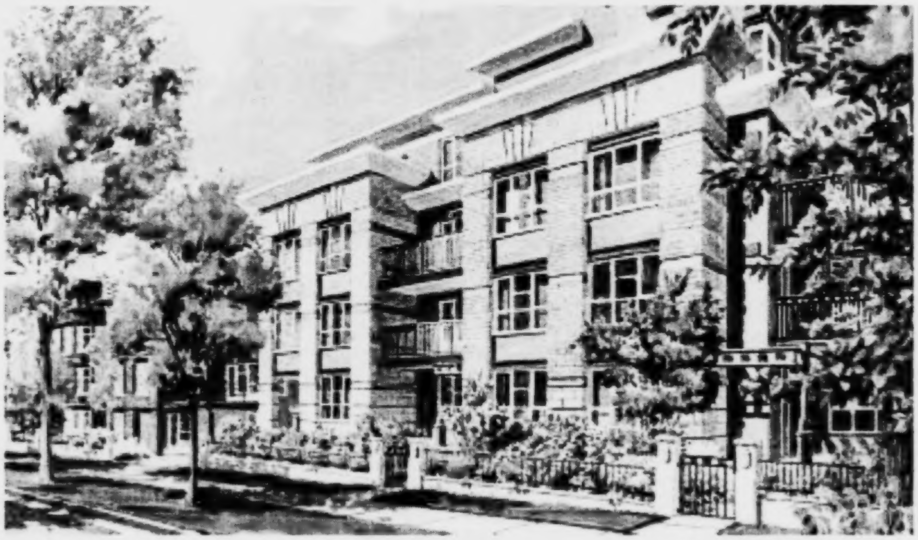
- By providing housing options, the potential for social interaction and better support of the downtown area and commercial establishments increases, potentially resulting in a more vital Edmonton.
- Having more people live in closer proximity to work, services and shopping will likely result in less vehicle travel, thus benefiting the environment with less air and water pollution.
- When medium density residential infill uses brownfield sites, the resulting product cleans up a contaminated site. As well, when medium residential housing is located within existing neighbourhoods, less greenfield land is used.

Viability

- Medium density residential infill projects can take advantage of existing infrastructure such as storm and sanitary sewer lines, power and telephone lines, and gas connections. Use of existing infrastructure, and their proximity to shopping and services may result in more financially viable housing projects.

Access

- Medium density residential infill housing adds more residents to a neighborhood, resulting in more people accessing services such as libraries, schools, parks and open space, as well as existing fire and police services.



IBI Group: **Walk-up Apartments**

2.0 DISCUSSION

What is Medium Density Residential Infill?

Medium density residential infill housing is development that fills the gaps in existing residential neighbourhoods and may play a fundamental role in revitalizing a community. Medium density infill projects can take advantage of a vacant parcel of land or occur through redevelopment of surface parking lots, declining shopping centers, underutilized health care facilities or aging buildings.

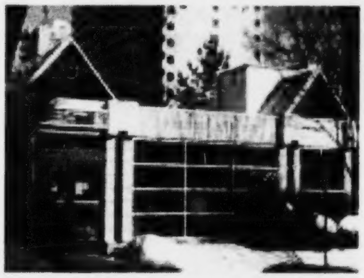
A. Lewis: **Example of Existing Medium Density Infill**

Why Does Edmonton Need Medium Density Infill?

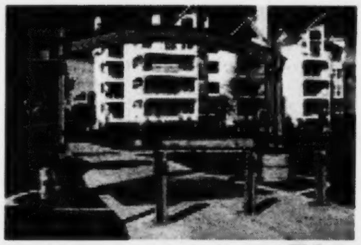
The City of Edmonton has estimated that over the next 20 years, approximately 140,000 people will move to Edmonton as 100,000 new jobs are created. The City forecasts that the number of people aged over 50 will continue to increase, as will the number of people in their 20s. Both these increases will result in more demand for apartments, homes for first time buyers, retirement housing, and housing that accommodates empty nesters.

As well, Edmonton is home to many fine post secondary educational institutions such as the University of Alberta, NAIT, Grant MacEwan, and many community colleges and computer institutes. Students attending these institutions will take advantage of medium density infill housing when offered within reasonable proximity to their chosen school.

A study done through the University of British Columbia summarized surveys on density and access to transit for major US and Canadian cities, and showed that doubling urban density results in a 25-30% reduction in vehicle kilometers travelled. Although medium density residential infill housing is not intended to double a neighbourhood's density, medium density infill in mature neighbourhoods in Edmonton can make a difference in providing housing and reducing travel distances.



D. Hunneman: **Grandin LRT Station**



IBI Group:
Railtown Infill Development

Inherent Urban Design Elements in Medium Density Infill Development

- On site parking – accommodate underground where possible.
- Adequate private and semi private open space. This is accomplished through ground level patios, balconies, green roofs and ground level landscaped open space.
- Protection of views. Ensuring views from windows are not directed into other unit's windows.
- Noise attenuation between suites, for units facing streets, and suites facing surface parking lots, and common landscaped areas.
- Screening of unsightly views such as garbage receptacles.
- Access to transit services, cycling and walking trails.
- Proximity to commercial establishments for employment opportunities and day-to-day needs.
- Access to services such as libraries, schools, police and fire.

2.0 DISCUSSION con't

Obstacles to Medium Density Infill Development

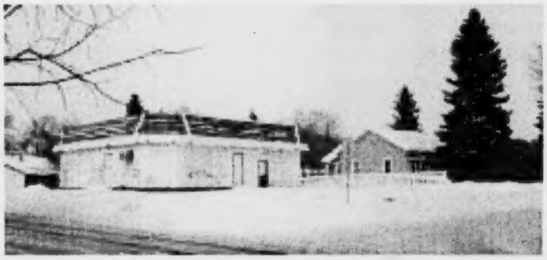
There are a number of obstacles to developing medium density infill in mature and suburban neighbourhoods.

PERCEIVED NON SUPPORT FROM CITY COUNCIL

- At times, developers perceive non support from Council, or feel the existing community plans in place are not being followed. Developers may also believe that policies are applied inconsistently. This may lead to the developer not proceeding with projects.

DIRECT COST / TIME DELAY ISSUES

- Sites that require clean up from a previous use will require environmental assessment and potential clean up. This will add time and costs to the project.
- Sites with historical or archeological characteristics may exist and may delay timing if interest groups become involved, or if sites require special design.
- Community attitudes to change in their neighbourhoods may add time to a project as concerns are addressed and people buy into the project.
- Poor drainage or soil issues could be costly to test, remove or amend.
- Existing wetlands or tree stands on a site may require special design solutions, and may delay project timing or add to project costs.
- Medium density infill projects sometimes require the assembly of multiple sites, which may require working with several owners to assemble the required land. This can heighten a developer's risk, cost and time requirements, as well as adding complexity to the project. Absentee owners can complicate a land assembly, and add time to the process as well.



D. Hunneman: **Potential Infill Site**

COMMUNITY REACTION

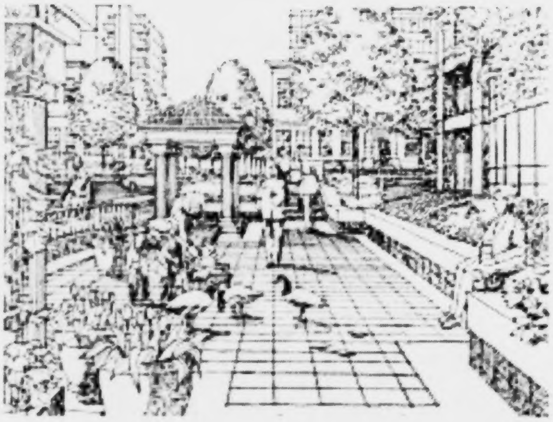
- Some residents may feel that medium density infill will not fit with their neighbourhoods and cause a loss of community identity. Some may feel that by adding more residents there will be increased traffic congestion, loss of open space, and loss of privacy.

D. Hunneman: **Medium Density Infill Development**

USE OF MUNICIPAL RESERVE CASH IN LIEU PAYMENTS

- Concerns have been expressed by developers and community league representatives as to whether the cash in lieu payments for reserve owing from infill development is used in the same neighbourhood as the infill development. If the cash-in-lieu payment is not used in the neighbourhood, it may lessen a community's future support of higher density projects in their neighbourhoods. It may also lessen a developer's desire to build again in an established community due to perceptions of the project taking away open space and adding more problems such as traffic congestion, parking and other issues that come with intensification.

3.0 EDMONTON FIT AND DESIGN ELEMENTS



IBI Group: Rendering of Amenity Space

For a medium density infill development to meet residents' needs and fit into Edmonton's urban fabric, the medium density development project should:

- Provide public and private amenity space including balconies, patios, green roofs, and landscaped open spaces.
- Be close to schools, parks and open space, and commercial establishments.
- Have access to public transit, bike and walking trails.
- Have a building mass appropriate for the neighbourhood location.
- Have the building height appropriate and in keeping with other buildings in the neighbourhood. If taller buildings are desired, design techniques such as stepping the building away from the street will allow sunlight to the street and into all units and potentially lessen the general impact.
- Buffer units from adjacent street noise.
- Consider parking requirements that do not impact existing residents.

Existing apartment style infill projects and those currently being built in Edmonton are, for the most part, located on arterial roads. The recommended lotting patterns, street types and relationship to the street are summarized in the Infill Development Matrix. These fit elements are important to ensure appropriate development results and contextual elements are addressed. These types of development may occur in mature or suburban neighbourhoods.

Medium Density Infill Matrix

UNIT TYPE	STREET TYPE	LOTTING PATTERN	RELATIONSHIP TO STREET
Town/Row House	Local road / collector	Grid / cul-de-sac	Verandahs /doors to the street.
Walk-up Apartments	Collector / arterial – access to be off collector	Grid	Patios, balconies to the street.
4-8 Story Apartment	Arterial – access to be off collector	Grid	Patios, balconies to the street.
Mixed Use Development	Local road / collector / arterial	Grid / cul-de-sac	Verandahs /doors to the street. Patios/balconies to the street.

IBI Group: Rendering of Infill Development and Amenity Space

4.0 IMPLEMENTATION

To encourage medium density infill or new development, a number of implementation actions can be taken:

1. Ensure Direction to Council is Clear

This can be accomplished through clear definitions of what medium density infill development is, specific design guidelines, and use of existing overlays for infill projects. Planning document such as Plan Edmonton and the Zoning Bylaw, and support of these initiatives in Area Structure Plans will help give clear direction.

2. Establish a Redevelopment Section

To work with communities and developers, it is recommended that the City establish a Redevelopment Section. The Redevelopment Section could be organized on a team approach and include representatives from Planning, Transportation, Community Services, Drainage, Emergency Response and others, as required. The Redevelopment Section would deal with medium density infill opportunities in Edmonton, working with developers and communities to project completion. The Redevelopment Section should:

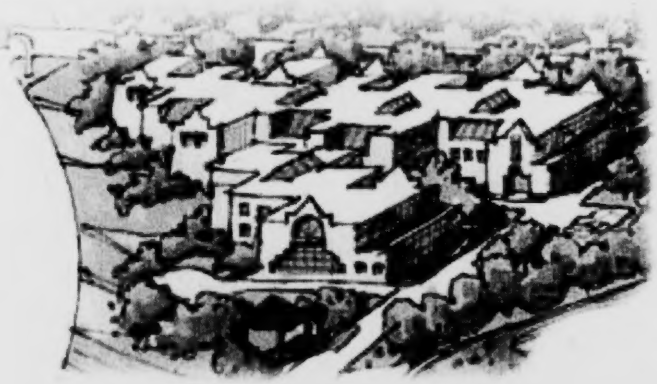
- Carry out land use surveys to identify potential infill opportunities in existing mature and suburban neighbourhoods.
- Assess adjacent land uses for potential conflicts.
- Consider pre-zoning parcels of land for medium density.

3. Offer Financial Incentives

The City could offer financial incentives for property owners and developers to encourage infill development. The incentives could include fee waivers or tax reductions. Required fees could be assessed according to proximity to downtown, existing commercial areas, post secondary institutions or other criteria set out by the City.

4. Streamline Development Application Process

To add certainty to the development process, it is recommended that the development application process be streamlined. The process should have specific time lines leading to a defined deadline. For medium density infill projects, the development application process should be handled by the Redevelopment Section, who will have knowledge and experience dealing with these types of projects.



IBI Group: Rendering of Apartment/Condominium Building

4.0 IMPLEMENTATION con't

5. Mature Neighbourhoods Design Standards

FOR LEASE
4 LOTS

D. Hunneman: **Potential Infill Site**

The design elements of good medium density should be summarized in a set of Mature Neighbourhoods Design Standards. These design standards would give direction to the design of medium density projects, and could become a check list for the development section when working with developers and assisting the projects through the development permit process. The design standards would include the inherent design elements of medium density infill development.

6. Market Project Amenities

Existing tree stands and wetlands benefit air and land and are a positive contributor to the health of our city. Historical and archeological characteristics can also be an asset for a project. These existing site elements can be accommodated into the design of a project and marketed as amenities in the new development.

I. Lewis: **Natural Tree Stand**

7. Infill Development Municipal Reserve/Cash in Lieu Policy

To ensure infill development in existing neighbourhoods continues to be an option for developers, the City should consider developing a policy to direct that municipal reserve cash in lieu dollars generated from infill development are used in the same neighbourhood as the infill project is built. The policy should ensure cash in lieu monies are used in a timely fashion or invested until needed for a project in the neighbourhood.

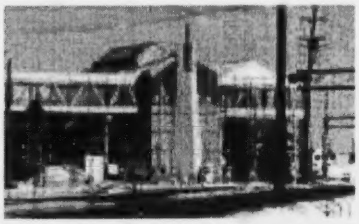
A. Lewis: **Condominiums with Amenity Space**

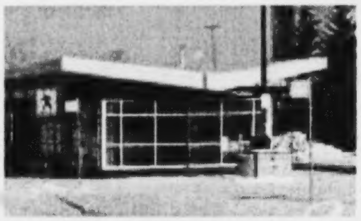
5.0 APPLICATION

Medium density residential infill should be encouraged in the following representative locations within Edmonton.

In Neighbourhoods Near LRT Stations, Bus Terminals and Bike Paths

The City has dedicated financial support to constructing the south side LRT stations. Neighbourhoods adjacent to these stations and those adjacent to the north side LRT stations offer opportunities for medium density infill. Neighbourhoods near bus terminals, such as Heritage Mall, are recommended as target neighbourhoods for medium density infill. Locating housing near transit services will be a win-win solution for both residents and the City by potentially increasing ridership and providing transportation options for residents.


D. Hunneman: **Belvedere LRT Station**


D. Hunneman: **Heritage Mall Transit Stop**

A. Lewis: **Bike/Walking Trails**

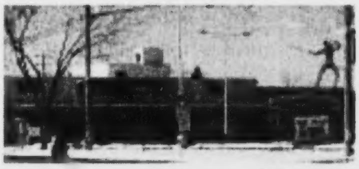
In Neighbourhoods Adjacent To Post Secondary Institutes

Neighbourhoods surrounding the University, NAIT the Grant MacEwan College campuses as well as near the other post secondary institutions in the city would be good locations for medium infill development.

D. Hunneman: **NAIT**

Near Commercial Establishments And Downtown Edmonton

Situating medium density infill in or near the downtown area of Edmonton and adjacent to commercial establishments will help to support businesses and services in these locations.


D. Hunneman: **Commercial Establishment**

In Neighbourhoods Where Medium Density Already Exists

Construction of new infill development should fit into the existing fabric of an existing medium density neighbourhood. Examples of these neighbourhoods are Oliver, Garneau, and Grandin.

D. Hunneman: **Existing Neighbourhood**

Existing Underutilized Shopping Centers

Construction of new residential development on the sites of underutilized shopping malls has been successful in better utilizing land and providing housing close to amenities, as was done at Meadowlark Mall. This type of medium density development could be implemented at other malls such Heritage, Westmount, Northgate or North Town malls. As well, vacant grocery store buildings such as Safeways, or their lots may be used for infill development. Often they are located on arterials and have good access.

D. Hunneman:
Existing Underutilized Shopping Centre

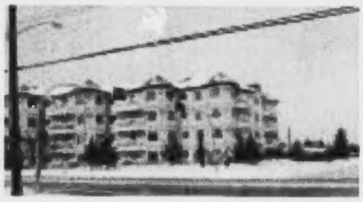
Abandoned or Underutilized Health Care Facilities

Abandoned or underutilized health care buildings, such as the Charles Camsell Hospital, offer opportunities for medium density infill development. The buildings could be refurbished into units, or new buildings built on the site.

D. Hunneman:
Underutilized Health Care Facility

Existing Corner Sites On Arterial Roadways

Corner sites on arterials present good design opportunities for medium density, as they have good access. The sites can be rezoned appropriately and meet housing needs. Existing corner sites on arterials tend to impact the community less than projects build in the middle of neighbourhoods by reducing traffic through the neighbourhood.



D. Hunneman:
Development on Corner/Arterial Site

6.0 OUTCOMES

Medium density residential infill development in Edmonton's mature and suburban neighbourhoods will result in both positive and negative outcomes.

AFFECTED STAKEHOLERS	POSITIVE OUTCOMES	NEGATIVE OUTCOMES
Development Industry	• More certainty to process. • Reduced cost/time in development process. • More market opportunities.	• Could result in many players and thus a surplus of units on the market.
Community/Neighbourhood Residents	• More certainty in design and fit of project with neighbourhood. • More cash in lieu payments spent in immediate neighbourhood. • Affordable housing options in immediate neighbourhood. • Replacement of aging/obsolete structures.	• Potential for traffic congestion, loss of vacant lots. • Perceived loss of community identity.
The City of Edmonton	• Increased tax revenue. • More efficient use of exisiting infrastructure and services.	• May require upgrade of City infrastructure/services to accommodate increased population density. • Redevelopment Section requires more staff or re-arrangement of City resources.

IBI Group: **Infill Development**

D. Hunneman: **Walk Up Apartments**

SmartChoices
for developing our community

IDEA SIX

Commercial and Industrial Transformation

Cover Photo: Urban Revision, Don Hussey

1.0 INTRODUCTION

High visibility commercial land with restricted access.

Photo by Don Hussey

This scenario was prepared to investigate options for revitalizing commercial and industrial land uses on arterial roads to enhance their use and attractiveness in Edmonton.

The scenario is a smart choice because these vacant and underutilized commercial and industrial sites are highly visible, they directly affect the perception Edmontonians have of older areas and they have a strong influence over neighbourhood and community vitality and pride. Unproductive property affects the way neighbours view their property and acts as a magnet for urban ills. It is a symptom of a poorly functioning investment process and reflects underlying inefficiencies in municipal infrastructure and the redevelopment process.

Vacant, underutilized land on 99 Street, Edmonton

Photo by Don Hussey

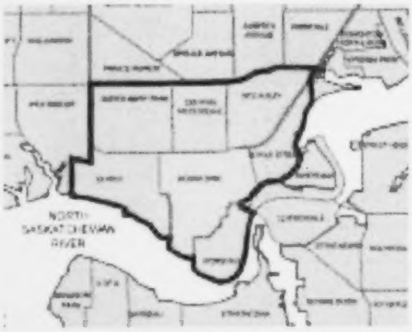
2.0 DISCUSSION

The current Edmonton Zoning Bylaw and industrial area planning approach locates commercial land uses along arterial roads bordering industrial areas. In essence, any scenario concerned with industrial/commercial transition is focused on primarily commercial land uses. They may target different markets, but they are all commercial.

Arterial roads are attractive to commercial land uses because they supply two essential elements every successful commercial site and business requires - good access and visibility. A good commercial site must also be large enough to accommodate competitively sized and attractive floor space and provide adequate and convenient parking.

Successful commercial sites transform on a more or less regular cycle of reinvestment. This scenario deals with "problem" sites that lack one or more of the essential elements for commercial success and do not transform on a regular basis.

Problem commercial sites are found in older commercial corridors, on the edge of industrial neighbourhoods and in transition areas around downtown. Age is often a common characteristic of these sites because it takes time for a problem site to be shown for what it is. Time also introduces changes in access and markets that can take a formerly strong site and relegate it to problem status.



Transition neighbourhoods and downtown Edmonton

Graphic by Pro-West CADD Consulting Inc.

Transformed commercial site on major arterial

Problem commercial sites cannot be assessed or understood separately from their markets. They are inexorably linked. A strong business with a good market can survive on a problem site, but at a less than optimal return. It often takes time to show that a weaker business in a declining market cannot survive on a problem site. Business managers generally know this and while trade-offs between site strength, market and business strength are considered, only gamblers are willing to test their acumen against a problem site that has market related issues.

The Role of the Market in Transformation

The market is the predominant influence over commercial land investments. The land development process is market driven and the value of a site comes from its relationship to the market. Familiarity of a site to consumers is important as is the ability to make one trip to attend to multiple needs.

Mixed use commercial and medium density residential on former industrial lands

Photo by Don Hussey

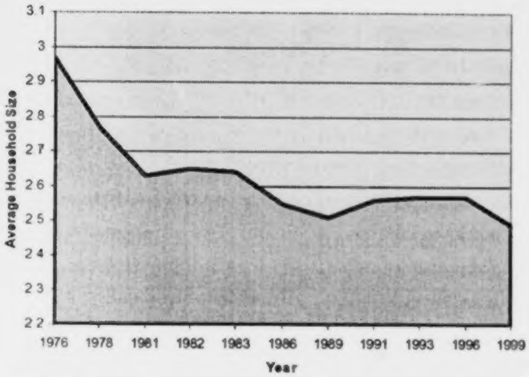
Car oriented commercial on arterial roadway

Photo by Don Hussey

The decision to invest and develop in a given location is driven by commercial tenants or an owner who wants to operate a business. The tenant establishes site value by signing a lease for space and creating a commitment to provide the owner with a cash flow. Few tenants focus on one market at a location (i.e. the commuter market). Most want a strong commuter and resident market and all want a healthy growth component in the primary market area.

What are the Key Issues in Commercial Transition?

Declining resident markets in transition areas limit reinvestment opportunities in arterial corridors. Average family size has been dropping consistently over the past 25 years. The loss of housing stock due to economic or technical obsolescence or replacement by nonresidential uses has also had a negative impact. In Edmonton, transition area populations continue to drop. Commercial tenants look for growth and their investment follows those trends. This puts older commercial sites at an even greater disadvantage in the eyes of new investors.

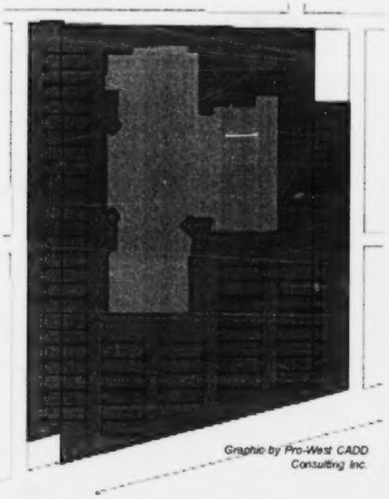


Average household size, Edmonton 1976 - 1999

Data from City of Edmonton

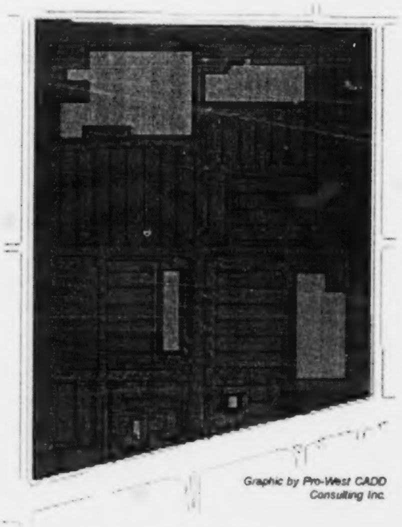
The community consultation risk is higher in redevelopment areas. This is a significant risk because of its unpredictability and the implications on redevelopment timing and market value. By comparison, greenfield areas have limited population and consultation risk is lower. Older neighbourhoods have greater populations with competing visions and achieving neighbourhood consensus on a new vision presented by an investor is difficult.

Infrastructure upgrades and improvements associated with land that is redeveloped are often a cost assigned to the investor during the process. These charges add significant costs to a project and are often surprise expenses. As such they are a major deterrent to the transition of older commercial sites and are a major factor causing some investors to delay or decline investment.



Graphic by Pro-West CADD Consulting Inc.

Original Unicity Regional Shopping Centre in Winnipeg.



Graphic by Pro-West CADD Consulting Inc.

New Unicity Power Centre after transformation.

Redevelopment is often controversial but not without benefits if sensitively planned and developed to reduce or eliminate negative external impacts. What is necessary is a process to allow a wide variety of sites to be planned for redevelopment using more appropriate land uses and a wide variety of planning tools.

Experience in Other Cities:

North Songhees in Victoria B.C. is a former industrial site on the inner harbour that had significant environmental issues. Reinvestment started with Co-opertive and Public Housing projects which introduced additional residential population into the area. Development has now advanced to include a food anchored commercial development and an office project along with additional multi residential projects.

Photo by Don Hussey

North Songhees area showing multi residential in background, commerical right and centre, Victoria

The Province was the initial landowner, but was not motivated to redevelop. Community groups were active and demanding. It was eventually agreed that the developers would pay for infrastructure and the City would rezone the site. The Province sold land to local developers who serviced the sites. The Project has now reached a critical mass as a neighbourhood and additional land remains to be developed.

Photo by Don Hussey

Successful Victoria infill project, James Bay

James Bay, a former Neighbourhood Improvement Program area in Victoria B.C. has some very creative multi residential redevelopment on formerly commercial and civic sites that are helping rebuild neighbourhood population and add family units on smaller, difficult sites within the neighbourhood context.

Winnipeg shopping centre locations are regularly redeveloped partly because Winnipeg has a slow growth market. At Polo Park, industrial zoning allows commercial uses as permitted uses without rezoning. A combination of high costs and complex regulations to develop downtown, the trend to big box retail and no development permit process in Winnipeg has led to intense retail redevelopment outside the downtown.

The lands that have been redeveloped to accommodate this transfer of commercial development were privately owned but many were facing obsolescence. Much of the downtown retail function has relocated to four malls with the largest concentration to Polo Park and surrounding former industrial lands. There are several fine examples where shopping centres have been completely or partially done over to accommodate current retailing requirements.

Photo by Don Hussey

Redeveloped Northdale Shopping Centre, Winnipeg

Successful muti residential infill on major arterial, Winnipeg

Photo by Don Hussey

Randal Homes of Winnipeg designed a project on a former commercial site located in an older area of Winnipeg. The site had difficult dimensions to accommodate residential in context with the adjacent single family residential. Randal constructed six ground oriented units on a site that would have supported two single family dwellings and did so within the character of the adjacent development. Some of these units have sold for a premium compared to their original sale price.

3.0 FIT AND DESIGN ELEMENTS

Land Use Options for Most Problem Sites Involve a Change of Use

The City role in neighbourhood planning can be an effective vehicle to introduce redevelopment to problem commercial sites. Neighbourhood planning offers the opportunity to discuss development related issues and conduct consultation without the pressure of a redevelopment application hanging over the collective heads of community residents.

Neighbourhood redevelopment in Oliver

Photo by Don Hussey

Multi residenial infill in context with adjacent development

Photo by Don Hussey

Only strong commercial sites should retain commercial designations under these reviews. In the case of industrial sites where there are fewer options for alternate uses, problem sites should be replanned to foster commercial activity.

The best option for most problem sites is to employ them to rebuild the neighbourhood residential population and market. In almost all cases there is sufficient buffer against nearby lower density residential and traffic impacts can be minimized through access control. Serviced land prices are generally similar, preserving value for an owner who transforms the land use and site. This approach allows the neighbourhood and the City to transform the site to increase neighbourhood population and re-establish a market.

Built Form Options Can Often Overcome Site Constraints if Flexibility Exists

Adjacent development provides the best context for redevelopment of problem commercial/industrial sites and offers not only guidance for density but also for character, colour and landscaping. However, flexibility is often necessary to overcome site constraints imposed by planning regulations.

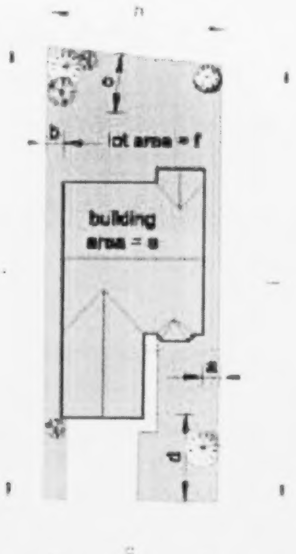
Six unit infill project on two lots

Photo by Don [illegible]

Some site constraints can be overcome with good building design. Safety and creating a healthful living and working environment should always be non-negotiable in looking for flexibility. However, planning preferences such as required yard criteria can be relaxed or reconsidered to make a site design work or to prevent a property from remaining undeveloped because it does not conform to current requirements.

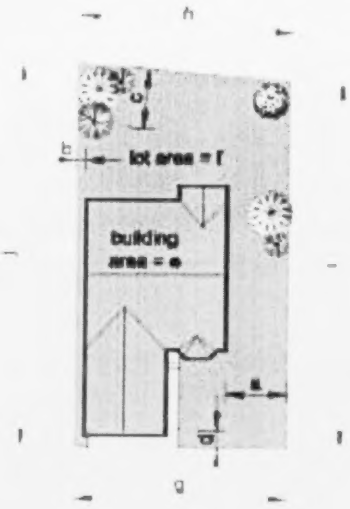
On problem sites transforming to residential land uses, standard planning design criteria may not always work. Site size or configuration may require an approach different from a centrally located building with large front and rear yards. This type of flexible approach to site design may also benefit from a more comprehensive review of alternatives by including the development officer and built form options at the planning stage.

Typical residential lot plan with large front and side yards.



Graphic by Phil [illegible] CADD Consulting Inc.

Creative shallow residential lot plan; minimal front and west side yards replace conventional yard requirements and consolidate amenity areas.



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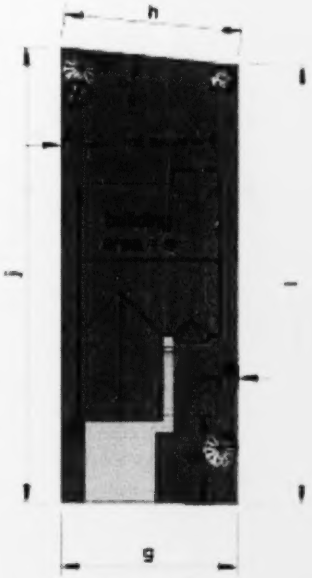
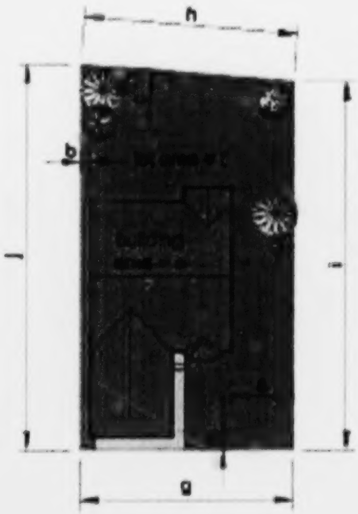


Graphic by Pro-West CADD Consulting Inc.



Graphic by Pro-West CADD Consulting Inc.

Creative shallow residential lot plan; minimal front and west side yards replace conventional yard requirements and consolidate amenity areas.

Does Public Space Have a Role?

Public space can add value to reinvestment and the neighbourhood. Public space can be parks, public utility lots, roads, lanes or even crossing rights that can be incorporated into a development proposal. Public space can be leveraged to increase the value of a redevelopment proposal to a neighbourhood by inducing additional investment in the adjacent sites. Adding value at approval negotiations should be undertaken within guidelines established in a neighbourhood plan.

Public space can be a strong incentive for density where appropriate. It can be used to offer value to investors to encourage redevelopment or used for things such as traffic calming to mitigate impacts of reinvestment and increased density. Timing of civic budget allocations for improvements can also be a positive value that can be used to achieve Plan objectives. Integrated public space increases adajacent redevelopment value and investment. Integrating public utility sites and parks into commercial redevelopment proposals can be done through common landscaping and other site design elements like street furniture. It can be a favourable arrangement to work out private maintenance for integrated public space as long as neighbourhood "ownership" remains the fundamental objective.

Photo by Don Hussey

Integrated mixed use site and public park, Edmonton

4.0 IMPLEMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

Successful Commercial Transition Requires a Market Approach

From a market perspective older commercial sites cannot be viewed outside the context of their surrounding neighbourhood. Older commercial neighbourhoods should first be evaluated as to their market strength, focusing on what is required to re-establish a resident market. An evaluation should also assess municipal infrastructure to identify any cost effective changes to support a larger resident market.

Photo by Don Hussey

Commercial infill along arterial with multi residential in back

Commercial infill with parking in neighbourhood context

Photo by Don Hussey

The objective to be achieved through increased densities is to establish a stronger resident market and make the most efficient use of the existing infrastructure currently in place without overtaxing the systems.

In addition to a market oriented approach for redevelopment, it is necessary to demonstrate a civic commitment to reinvestment. The best way to build this commitment to increased density is through neighbourhood planning. In addition, neighbourhood reinvestment must be supported through a commitment of municipal funds and staff and the identification of strategic upgrades to neighbourhood infrastructure.

Investor and Neighbourhood Goals can be Mutually Supportive

Planning design flexibility is necessary in older areas. As part of the neighbourhood planning exercise, the City should establish flexible redevelopment guidelines for investors doing what the neighbourhood and City wants. The City should also combine land use and site planning approvals with building permit reviews in appropriate situations to use building design to help address site planning issues. Integration of public space into problem site design can also introduce flexibility to achieve neighbourhood objectives and encourage reinvestment.

New mixed use condominium project

Photo by Don Hussey

From a process perspective, it is important to establish a level playing field for investors. Neighbourhood planning exercises should include the rezoning of problem sites to encourage conversion. This not only opens up the opportunities for investment by a wider range of potential investors once zoning issues have been dealt with, it removes much of the consultation risk that creates so much uncertainty and drives up the cost of redevelopment for all stakeholders.

Highly developed and used park space surrounded by high density residential

Photo by Don Hussey

The City Must Take an Active Role in Encouraging Commercial Transition

Taking an active role starts with the establishment of key positions to coordinate a civic approach to commercial transition. The City should create a redevelopment office to coordinate civic actions. That office should be involved in preparation of a coordinated civic budget to evaluate and identify infrastructure issues associated with potential transitions. The redevelopment office should also be involved in the development of an objective approach to identify good reinvestment sites. The City should revisit neighbourhood plans and discuss opportunities with neighbourhood residents. They should sell the benefits of managed transition to the neighbourhood because there are gains from redevelopment that can have a very positive impact on older problem commercial sites and adjacent neighbourhoods. The City should proceed with a formal process to revise neighbourhood plans and zoning with neighbourhood input where there are benefits to be realized for the City, the neighbourhood and investors.

5.0 APPLICATION

Successful commercial transition comes with redevelopment and reinvestment. The path to successful transition starts with approved neighbourhood plans to support re-establishment of neighbourhood markets on marginal commercial sites. Rebuilding the resident market in turn supports commercial reinvestment. With the new population, reinvestment and jobs will come the neighbourhood vitality and support sought in every neighbourhood.

Timing on reinvestment varies with the strength of the land market and the tenant's market(s). Rezoning the land for transformation, the willingness of the owner to participate, knowledge of development related costs including infrastructure related costs and the clarity of information on the site would also influence timing.

New commercial mall serving new residential projects

Photo by Don Hussey

Infill mixed use project in low density area

Photo by Don Hussey

Edmonton should focus on older commercial sites on arterial roads in commercial corridors and on older commercial and vacant sites in transition areas. Key indicators of suitable properties are sites with obsolete facilities, sites with persistent leasing programs and vacancies, sites missing key elements for commercial success and sites where increased residential densities within their neighbourhood context would not be a significant issue.

Priority should be given to sites where success is relatively easy to achieve and positive results can be demonstrated that benefit all stakeholders, particularly the neighbourhoods who are in a key position within the process. On the initial sites, the City might look at funding some strategic infrastructure improvements and making their efforts known in the development community to encourage investor interest.

6.0 OUTCOMES

Encouraging the revitalization of commercial and industrial uses on arterial roads will have both positive and negative outcomes.

Stakeholders	Positive Outcomes	Negative Outcomes
Community Residents and Groups	Reinvestment in problem sites and neighbourhoods Revisit local planning issues with new approach Civic commitment to infrastructure maintenance	Commitment of time and effort to support neighbourhood planning Relies on trust that impacts of intensification can be mitigated prior to application No timeline on reinvestment
Investors/ Proponents	Invest in prezoned land without hidden infrastructure costs Consultative risk reduced or removed Existing market with growth potential City commitment to infrastructure maintenance Comparable to Greenfield investment risk Flexibility in site design criteria where essential	May need additional funding to integrate proposal with public space Infrastructure improvement costs associated with increased density
City	Reestablish neighbourhood planning Address significant neighbourhood planning issues Private reinvestment in older neighbourhoods and transition of problem sites to appropriate uses Increased tax base and improved buildings in high visibility locations	Possible additional investment in neighbourhood infrastructure with additional development
Neighbourhood Institutions	Increased school age population from new family oriented residential units Increased participation in community league programs Better use of community facilities	Possible new investment required to accommodate increased use of neighbourhood institutions

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IDEA SEVEN

Neighbourhood Reinvestment Strategy

Cover Photo: Urban Revision, Don Hussey

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This scenario was prepared to investigate options for areas where income levels and social conditions challenge reinvestment in the neighbourhood. Reinvestment should benefit rather than displace residents.

This scenario is a smart choice because while these communities are well located in relation to services and economic activity, they have not seen much reinvestment. Stimulation is seen as one strategy to address this need. In addition to reinvestment, the provision of affordable housing in disadvantaged mature communities is seen as a desirable outcome.

Photo by Don Hussey

Residential infill in Victoria

Photo by Don Hussey

Older residential area suitable for reinvestment

2.0 DISCUSSION

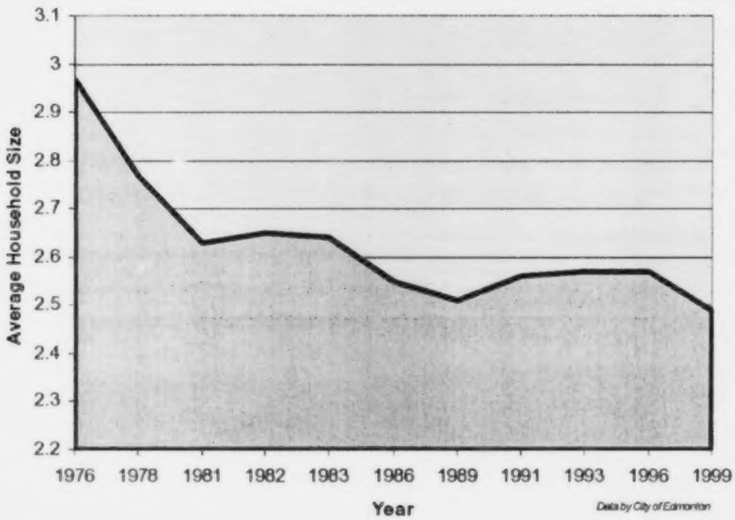
Key Neighbourhood Related Issues in Reinvestment

Neighbourhoods with aged facilities and buildings facing technical and economic obsolescence are good candidates for reinvestment. Neighbourhoods with underutilized land and infrastructure are also strong candidates. Neighbourhoods facing growing suburban traffic flows as a result of weekday commuter traffic or as a result of crosstown or bridge focused traffic are also good candidates. These characteristics indicate a level of development pressure and decline that can negatively alter neighbourhoods over time, and situations where change that addresses issues may be acceptable.

Photo by Don Hussey

Increased commuter traffic changes market opportunities.

Average household size by year for Edmonton 1976 - 1999



Data by City of Edmonton

Demographic and population trends can also be good indicators of neighbourhood decline. Lowering average household sizes have been witnessed city wide but loss of population has also been due to the loss of housing stock and services. More homogenous neighbourhood populations also change support for age targeted activities such as schools. These trends often identify neighbourhoods fighting to retain basic services and identity.

Social and economic impacts accentuate some of these problems. Older low priced housing attracts the economically disadvantaged. Economic disadvantage is a reasonably good predictor of a poor ability to cope with personal and social issues found in most urban settings as well. Some neighbourhoods are also stigmatized by illegal and undesirable activities and behaviour which further saps vitality from the community.

Key Investment Related Issues in Redevelopment

The planning process creates different risks for investors in older areas when compared to investments in greenfield sites in suburban locations. Consultation related risk is much higher with redevelopment projects primarily because there are many competing visions for individual sites and their neighbourhoods. In older neighbourhoods, the redevelopment process is usually much less time certain than in newer suburban areas. For an investor evaluating investment options between older urban and suburban locations, these are significant issues.

Residential markets in older areas usually lack significant growth components because their future land use is typically believed to be oriented more to commercial than residential. Resident populations often experience significant declines from their original levels due to a variety of factors such as competition for high visibility commercial land or demolition of buildings resulting from neglect or obsolescence. Commuter markets may be well developed because of high traffic flows but reinvestment is limited to frontage on arterial roads. Business to business and other markets may develop but are often insufficient to support significant reinvestment.

The reinvestment process in older areas is not smooth. Some neighbourhoods can be ignored by investors for years. Once one project succeeds, that new approach may become flavour of the month and several examples of it will be developed elsewhere in older areas. The fact remains that few investors like to pioneer in a market and still fewer bankers are willing to finance pioneering.

The Role of the Market in Reinvestment

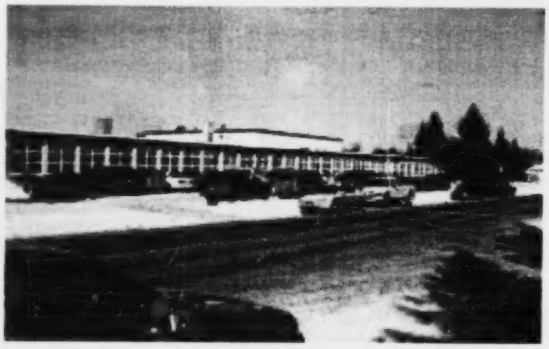
The market is the predominant influence on development investments. Developed land is usually in fragmented ownership and expensive to assemble. Each neighbourhood has public lands that can be leveraged but initiating and sustaining redevelopment activity in one area is too much for the City. That is better left to the market. When funds are available, the City can make seed investments in publicly funded projects like public housing. However, the extent of investment required to have some impact is extensive and the City as manager of the process can have a greater impact elsewhere.

Investments are influenced by many factors but the key elements are the end market participants. Commercial investment is driven by commercial tenants and the demand arising from residents. Residential investment is driven by the eventual resident's decision criteria to buy a home. Quite often, family residential investment decisions are driven more by "family" infrastructure-schools, playgrounds, parks and convenient access to other family related services.

Infill housing orientated to school site. Photo by Don Hussey

For this reason, residential infrastructure is a fundamental element to most investment decisions. While quality of infrastructure or service may be a matter of opinion, the absence of infrastructure or service in a neighbourhood is indisputable. Rebuilding services that have been relocated out of an older neighbourhood because client population has slipped below a desired standard is very difficult.

Infill project in older neighbourhood, Victoria. Photo by Don Hussey



Schools are necessary to attract family-oriented redevelopment. Photo by Don Hussey

Barriers and Disincentives to Reinvestment

There are a number of disincentives to reinvestment. Consultation and the time and dollar cost to obtain public approval is high. Social issues in disadvantaged neighbourhoods often seem more visible. However, most social problems are not addressable through redevelopment of land because redevelopment does not address the fundamental reasons behind the problem. As in any neighbourhood, poor quality or poorly maintained housing discourages reinvestment.

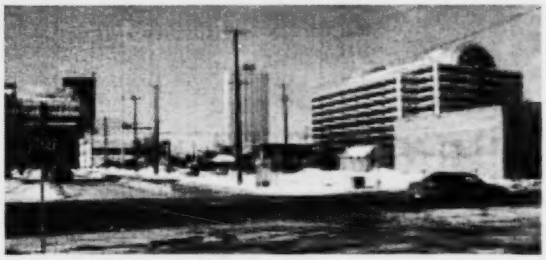
Former CN city yard redevelopment in Edmonton

Photo by Don Hussey

Municipal and institutional infrastructure gaps may discourage investment as they are difficult or expensive to overcome. Loss of some services may not be apparent at the time of purchase, creating the potential for expensive surprises.

Redevelopment projects face many challenges. Investors with unique or small market projects usually need additional financial resources to make up for financing unavailable from conventional lending sources. Marketing costs per unit on smaller redevelopment projects are more expensive. Planning design criteria based on suburban concepts may not be applicable to older problem sites.

Redevelopment approvals are negotiated in a complex process which provides a means of addressing a wide variety of issues and concerns that arise during the development process. The fact that it changes somewhat every time one goes through the process is testimony to its adaptability and the vitality of the process itself. However, there are perspectives that regularly get lost during reviews. For example, at public meetings, it is often difficult to find someone representing the broader public interest when neighbours agree that a particular land use is necessary, but not in their neighbourhood.



Vacant lands in transition area near downtown.

Photo by Don Hussey

Incentives to Stimulate Reinvestment

Programs supporting private investment are limited from all levels of government relative to even a few years ago. Some funding is in place to assist in the redevelopment of historical buildings, to promote energy efficiency through design and construction, for natives and for youth. Affordable housing money appears from time to time from all levels of government and the City runs its Low Income Housing Capital Assistance Program program but all are limited in the amounts available and the part of the process the funds can be applied to. Infrastructure money has been provided and limited federal spending was noted in the recent budget. There are gasoline tax dollars available for arterial roads and municipal dollars available for sidewalks and lanes. Even if the limited program funding could be targeted directly to specific older neighbourhoods, it would not result in a significant change. The demand for funds is very high.

Parts of the redevelopment process do stimulate reinvestment and have been noted. City staff make the process work through commitment, experience and dedication to their individual responsibilities.

Former lane closed for private redevelopment.

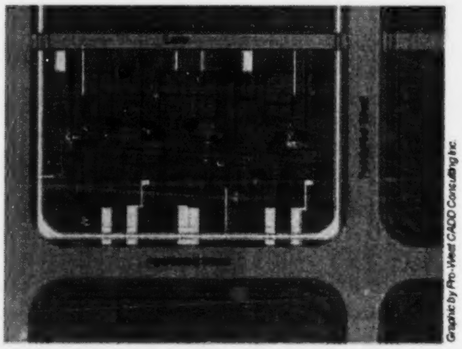
Photo by Dan Hussey

Adding Value to Encourage Reinvestment

Incentives can be good and bad. The purpose of an incentive is to add value to cause decisions to be made when or where they otherwise would not occur. Indiscriminate incentives can distort a market to the point where the incentive becomes the problem rather than the solution. Those offering an incentive often do not fully understand the value offered to those who use them. Incentives that are low or no cost to the party offering the incentive, but of higher value to a party making use of them can provide a significant return and be very cost effective.

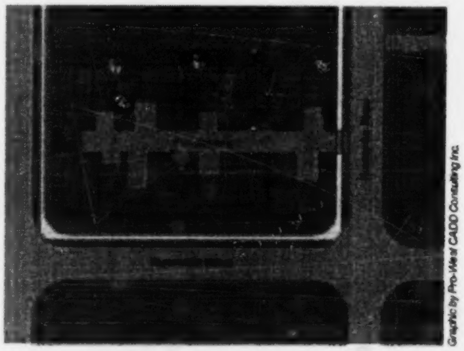
Creating a level playing field in the development process for an investor evaluating greenfield and older area investments is a low cost incentive. The cost of the incentive is the cost of changing the development process an investor faces. Another incentive to induce redevelopment is to provide information on available investment opportunities to investors and their agents. Accommodating alternative design approaches to design issues can be an important incentive to investors as well.

Managing redevelopment at increased densities in older neighbourhoods not only enhances site planning options for existing and future land owners, it can deliver long term results to the City in terms of efficiencies in municipal services, increased investment and the transition of what might be considered a negative factor in a neighbourhood to a positive element. Selling the advantages of increased density to disadvantaged neighbourhoods where it can be supported by municipal infrastructure and services without significant additional investment has many benefits. It has the potential to provide a win/ win/ win situation to prospective investors, the City and neighbourhoods that have suffered through declines in resident population, the loss of commercial and institutional services and the loss of neighbourhood vitality.



Graphic by Pro-West CADD Consulting Inc.

"Zipper" style site planning option for low density redevelopment.



Graphic by Pro-West CADD Consulting Inc.

Site planning option for low density redevelopment allowing for internal access.

Experience in Other Cities

Reinvestment in older neighbourhoods and redevelopment takes time. James Bay neighbourhood, located south of downtown Victoria was the subject of a Neighbourhood Improvement Program and Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program in the late 1970s. Considerable private investment has occurred and now the residential parts of the neighbourhood all exhibit signs of continued investment. New commercial investment has been made along edge of the neighbourhood and harbour bringing new jobs into the area and activity to the neighbourhood perimeter.

North Songhees, located across the inner harbour from downtown Victoria has now attracted commercial, office and condo housing in the last two years. Development on these former industrial lands started with several co-op and affordable housing initiatives and has grown over time. More private investment is being made on adjacent sites and the prospects for growth are very good.

Infill housing in James Bay, Victoria. Photo by Don Hussey

Harris Green, east of downtown Victoria has been undergoing some reinvestment that has included both the City, landowners and businesses. The area had fragmented ownership and indifferent owners. The greatest barrier was generating interest in redevelopment. The City held a design charette in 1997 with local owners and eventually invested considerable dollars in street furniture and sidewalks. Initial investments of time and infrastructure money are now being matched by private owners and investors in condos and new commercial development.

North Songhees brownfield redevelopment showing residential with retail and office commercial. Photo by Don Hussey

3.0 FIT AND DESIGN ELEMENTS

There are three elements of this reinvestment strategy that will ease the acceptance of this approach in the Edmonton context and make it work. First, a civic commitment needs to be generated that will start and support the process of reinvestment. Second, Edmonton neighbourhoods with declining population and housing stock, underutilized infrastructure and where residents are willing to demonstrate a strong commitment to reinvestment need to be identified for the strategy to work. Third, low cost incentives need to be integrated into the Edmonton development process to attract the attention and assets of investors.

4.0 IMPLEMENTATION

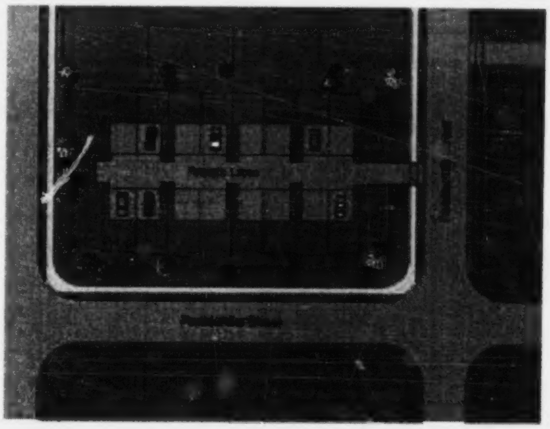
An open, consistent process with certainty on timing, public participation and protection of property rights supports reinvestment, long term neighbourhood interests and those of the investor. Maintenance of physical and service infrastructure in the neighbourhood by the service provider is also an important function as well. Finally, there is a need to balance support for neighbourhood and city wide planning objectives.

Photo by Don Hussey

Former CP yard redevelopment in Edmonton.

How does Edmonton Stimulate Reinvestment

Removing barriers and disincentives to new investment in older disadvantaged neighbourhoods is an obvious and a low cost step in the process of stimulating reinvestment. Using a formal neighbourhood planning process to identify and confirm potential sites and prezoning land for increased density will encourage neighbourhood reinvestment. The neighbourhood planning process ensures neighbourhood input on the location of higher density development and measures to mitigate negative effects like increased traffic. It gives an opportunity to explain the benefits of increased density without the pressure of an application in the process. This leaves investors and landowners to develop sites with reduced consultation risk. Finally, it is possible to review the infrastructure related impacts of higher density and new investment to better understand the costs and potential surprises to investors or the City.



Graphic by Pro-West CADD Consulting Inc.

Site planning option for medium density redevelopment.

Building on what the process already does well, going back to neighbourhood planning programs in older neighbourhoods and removing disincentives gives administration staff room to work with investors to create quality development. This approach requires that City Council establish a clear civic commitment to reinvestment and the City gets the message out to investors that opportunities exist in what will again be growing, vital neighbourhoods.

Supporting higher residential densities creates a win-win-win situation. The City gets new investment, additional tax base, jobs and increased efficiency in service provision. Investors get a straightforward investment process with reduced or no consultative risk, fewer, if any surprises and the ability to get involved in character projects within an existing market. Neighbourhoods get new residents, service issues addressed, density on terms they are directly involved in setting and support for marginal schools and other community services.

1. Identify and Prioritize Disadvantaged Neighbourhoods

The first step in stimulating reinvestment is to develop an objective process to identify disadvantaged neighbourhoods and assign a priority for addressing the issues. The process should focus on aged neighbourhoods with a declining population base and neighbourhoods where school capacities indicate underutilized institutional infrastructure. Other symptoms like declining housing stocks should be evaluated.

2. Establish a Redevelopment Office

This investigation is ideally taken on through a Redevelopment Office created within the civic administration to address redevelopment planning. This office would coordinate the redevelopment planning process, present compelling arguments for reinvestment and provide information on prospective sites for increased densities.

Having a redevelopment office requires the establishment of a budget for planning and for service and facility infrastructure upgrades to support reinvestment in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. The budget would support reinvestment objectives, assist in maintaining and relieving older system components and demonstrate civic commitment to infrastructure management and reinvestment in older areas.

Community leagues are active in neighbourhood planning.

Photo by Don Hussey

The redevelopment office and staff would undertake to update or prepare neighbourhood plans in a formal statutory process. They would establish program priorities based on neighbourhood evaluations and options, consult with residents, review the benefits of increased densities and plan to re-establish neighbourhood populations and services.

3. Prezoning and Creating a Level Playing Field

The planning exercise would focus on the prezoning of acceptable sites for higher density. The City and residents would identify sites that can accommodate higher density without negative impacts, ensure infrastructure issues can be addressed cost effectively, identify flexible planning criteria, zone sites for intended density and establish implementation criteria for any related municipal infrastructure upgrades or improvements.

Medium density infill site in context with adjacent development. *Photo by Don Hussey*

Dealing with infrastructure and consultation issues during the prezoning removes development risk that the investor faces in trying to gain approvals for the redevelopment of an older neighbourhood site. Any investor looking at real estate opportunities could compare the investments on the project merits and not have to factor in consultation related allowances for time, contingency and additional risk. In fact, without a need to rezone, many sites only need a builder, not a developer, opening up the market to a much broader group of potential investors. In addition, with a civic program in place to assess infrastructure and other related costs, there should be ample information to evaluate the full cost of development and reduce the risk associated with infrastructure upgrades as well.

5.0 APPLICATION

The main thrust of the reinvestment strategy is increasing residential densities through neighbourhood planning. Sites on the periphery of a neighbourhood, sites with direct arterial or residential collector status roadway access and sites where traffic impacts can be successfully eliminated are all prime candidates for intensification.

Medium density mixed use redevelopment. *Photo by Don Hussey*

The City cannot influence the timing of redevelopment without direct investment (an excellent starting point if funding is available). Assuming that no or limited dollars are available beyond the cost of setting up an office and undertaking one or more neighbourhood planning exercises, any dollars available from the City should be applied to infrastructure as dictated by revised neighbourhood plans. Some should be applied to provide information on possible investments to potential investors or their agents.

Reinvestment should not overtax new or planned physical infrastructure managed and operated by the municipality or others such as the school board when identified in a neighbourhood plan. The community may also be interested in limiting development to family or non family orientation depending on the intent behind neighbourhood expansion.

Density increases in steps over a redevelopment site.
Photo by Don Hussey

6.0 OUTCOMES

Reinvestment in neighbourhoods where income levels and social conditions challenge this process will have both positive and negative outcomes.

STAKEHOLDERS	POSITIVE OUTCOMES	NEGATIVE OUTCOMES
Community residents and groups	Reinvestment in problem sites in neighbourhood Civic commitment to infrastructure maintenance Key input in neighbourhood planning Revisit local planning issues with new approach	More time and effort for community meetings No firm timelines for redevelopment of these sites No firm timelines for improved services/ facilities
Investors/ Owners	Reduced community consultation risk Infrastructure risk reduced Creates market with growth potential Flexibility to develop difficult sites City commitment to infrastructure maintenance	Community has expectations for project that may be unrealistic General zoning class on land may not allow what market wants
City of Edmonton	Reestablish neighbourhood planning Ability to address some planning issues in older neighbourhoods Increased tax base and jobs Improved neighbourhood infrastructure	Scarce budget dollars committed for infrastructure No firm timelines for redevelopment of any sites Some social issues cannot be addressed through redevelopment
Neighbourhood Institutions	Possible increases in client population Better use of community facilities	Some client service provisions will need to be adjusted over time as development proceeds Possible new investment required

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IDEA EIGHT

Consultation Process

Cover Photo: The DAGNY Partnership

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Photo The DAGNY Partnership

This scenario proposes a proactive consultation approach for development proposals in planned areas of Edmonton. This approach highlights the critical "foundation elements" required for effective community engagement and provides a structured decision-making approach to be used by all stakeholders to plan and implement more effective community consultation. It shifts the emphasis from reacting to applications to creating an environment that supports community interaction. The Smart Choice benefits of this proactive consultation framework include:

1. Creating *smarter* community decision-making

Effective consultation offers the opportunity for all interested stakeholders to provide input into the decision-making process – not only the vocal or influential few. It uses community resources and goodwill more constructively by fostering an informed dialogue rather than reacting to community battle lines.

Smart decision-makers take time to understand their environment, learn about the interests of others and explore various options before formulating their position. The approach mirrors this decision-making structure.

2. *Smarter* problem-solving to foster vitality

Effective engagement connects the community. New skills, different experiences and alternate solutions are brought to the discussion table. The result is an enriched community with development solutions that results in a strong sustainable community that will stand the test of time.

The result is an enriched community with strong, sustainable development solutions that will stand the test of time.

3. Growing *smarter* communities

Land will be developed and Edmonton's City Council will decide what form that development takes. Constructive input offers the opportunity to influence Council as they strive to balance the rights of the landowner and the rights of the impacted and broader community. They want to find the "best long-term fit" for the whole community.

However to be constructive, input must be timely and informed. Participants need a solid base of understanding about the rights, responsibilities, scope and limitations inherent in Edmonton's land development process.

This approach increases the emphasis on:

- supporting approved neighbourhood plans, enhancing community education in land development,
- implementing a consistent but flexible approach focused towards project outcomes,
- enhancing consultation skills for all the participants,
- nurturing accountability that respects the rights and responsibilities of the landowners, local residents and the community at large.

Even *smart* change isn't easy

Land development creates change and any change creates reaction. Effective consultation can turn reaction into constructive dialogue helping communities define smarter development solutions.

Effective consultation…

…means proactive planning and preparation to get it right.

…takes commitment by all stakeholders to participate in a open and honest manner.

…accepts that not everyone will agree, as long as everyone is fairly heard and considered.

…leads to timely decisions that are "smarter for our community" and are embraced by more people.

2.0 DISCUSSION

Understanding the Current Process

The current process for new land development is:

- City defines new areas for development in Plan Edmonton
- Developer completes an Area Structure Plan (ASP) and in some cases a Neighbourhood Area Structure Plan (NASP) which broadly defines the 'anticipated' land use and general location.
- When the developer is ready to develop an area within a defined ASP, they prepare a Neighbourhood Structure Plan (NSP). The NSP shows in greater detail the general pattern for subdivisions by designating land uses by type, size, and location, the transportation network (including local roads), location and size of neighbourhood facilities and the staging of the development.
- The NSP should reflect the intent of the original ASP.
- Both types of plans are approved by Council.
- The balance of the land in the ASP is left as is, most often agricultural land.
- When additional new development commences, the developer must either complete a NSP for the new area or apply for a rezoning (re-districting) of the specific parcel of land from the original designation to the desired zoning.

Photo The DAGNY Partnership

Prior to the Council decision there are several opportunities for impacted stakeholders to review the proposals, identify the issues that their organization or department may envision and to offer alternate recommendations.

The approximate timeframe for these activities are as follows:

- ***ASP – 12 - 24 months***
- ***NSP and NASP – 6 - 8 months***

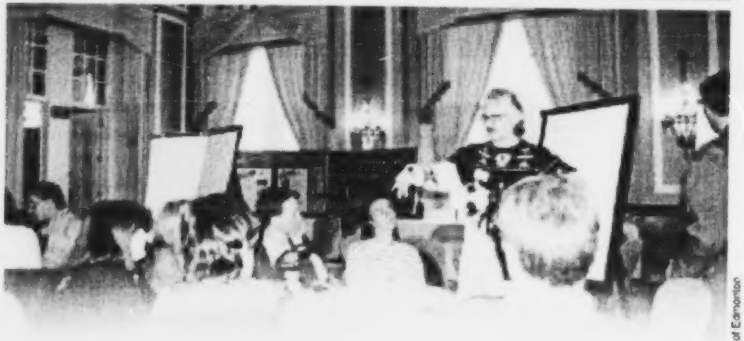


Photo City of Edmonton

Current Public Notification and Consultation

The Planning and Development Department requires stakeholder consultation as a part of the development of any plan. They may undertake this directly or may require the applicant to undertake it.

For rezoning applications, Planning may facilitate a public meeting if the scale and scope of the project warrants.

Formal consultation occurs with two groups.

Technical and Formal Stakeholder Applications and plans are circulated to a broad list of 15-30 stakeholder departments and organizations. Each is given time to provide input on the proposed application or plan.

This circulation list could include civic departments, Capital Health, all of the utilities and impacted Community Leagues or the Edmonton Federation of Community League's (EFCL) Planning Committee.

The "General" Community

Plan approval and rezoning currently require the following:

- written notification to adjacent landowners and/or impacted property owners within the plan area;
- a public meeting;
- written notification to adjacent landowners within the plan area, of the upcoming Public Hearing;
- newspaper advertisement of the Statutory Public Hearing; and
- Statutory Public Hearing in front of Council.

Because the ASP/NASP/NSP process develops primarily new areas, there are rarely many immediate stakeholders. The tactics used to consult with stakeholders include individual or small group meetings with landowners or special interest groups (i.e. environmental protection), direct mail and advertising.

In some cases, where the proximity or impact to existing residents warrants, a community advisory committee may be established to provide input through the review process. The following additional consultation activities may occur:

- Public Meeting to introduce the project and process;
- series of regular meetings to identify issues, options and alternatives; and
- several open houses or public meetings to update the community on the progress.

Photo EDE

2.0 DISCUSSION (continued)

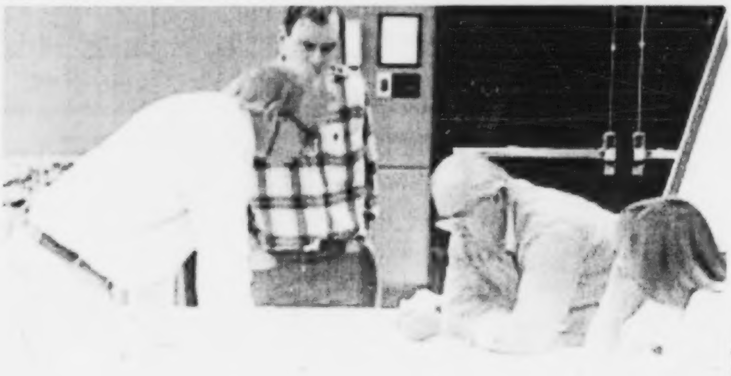


Photo City of Edmonton

Factors Impacting Current Consultation Process

Five important factors impact the effectiveness of the consultation process in new development.

1. Most of the stakeholders who are consulted during the initial planning are not the residents that will live there.
2. While the land may be identified in macro terms for general uses, all the land is not rezoned at one time. Some land is left to be rezoned later when the market is more attractive.
3. The responsibility lies with the consumer to check and understand the approved land use plans.
4. Landowners will assume that they have the right to develop their land at a future point in time within the approved direction of the ASP/ NASP. They may also feel that they have a good opportunity to change the type or level of development to meet future market conditions.
5. Land development in Edmonton has experienced large gaps of time between the initial planning and the rezoning of new parcels of land. This can contribute to misperceptions of the approved use.

Community Reaction – Contributing factors

Developers can face stiff community reaction when they apply to rezone land – either for use that complies with the approved plan or when they want to change the plan.

Several reasons emerge:

- The new residents may or may not have reviewed the ASP/NASP when they moved to the area. They may have relied on information from real estate agents or developers that may not be complete or accurate.
- Landowners may not understand the implications of the approved use.
- Both residents and developers may have unrealistic expectations on what they can achieve – either to change the neighbourhood or contain any change in the neighbourhood.
- People don't focus on something until they are faced with a specific project. ***Change triggers attention and reaction.***
- People fear that change will negatively impact them. Some people react simply because it will be different.

Photo The DAGNY Partnership

Landowners have legitimate expectations

In addition to the reasonable expectation that the land could be developed within the intent of the ASP/NASP, most landowners expect that the application process should be timely, consistent, fair and transparent.

Because land development takes place over a period of time, the initial market conditions may change. When this occurs, the developer has a reasonable expectation that their application would receive fair consideration through the review process by the public and decision makers based on its merits and impacts of the proposal.

This should occur even if the development proposal requires amendments to the current approved plans.

However, this should not infer that the developer's needs should drive amendments to the approved plans.

When changes to the ASP/NASP are required ***both the landowner and the community have the right to influence the nature - if any - of the change.***

Both groups have a legitimate right to be heard and have their views weighed by Council in light of the overall long-term vision for the City.

Photo The DAGNY Partnership

2.0 DISCUSSION (continued)

Conflict inherent in land development

Conflict is inherent in land development. However, conflict, when managed, contributes to the generation of alternate solutions that create more benefits for more stakeholders.

With Edmonton's growing municipal infrastructure and development pressures, more communities will face change. The Planning and Development Department must nurture an environment that will effectively manage and support these change-pressures.

Creating this environment is an ongoing process and is fundamental to establishing an effective working relationship between all parties.

As the land development proposal becomes more defined, the potential for conflict rises; and the greater the need for a strong working relationship between all the stakeholders that is based on knowledge and respect.

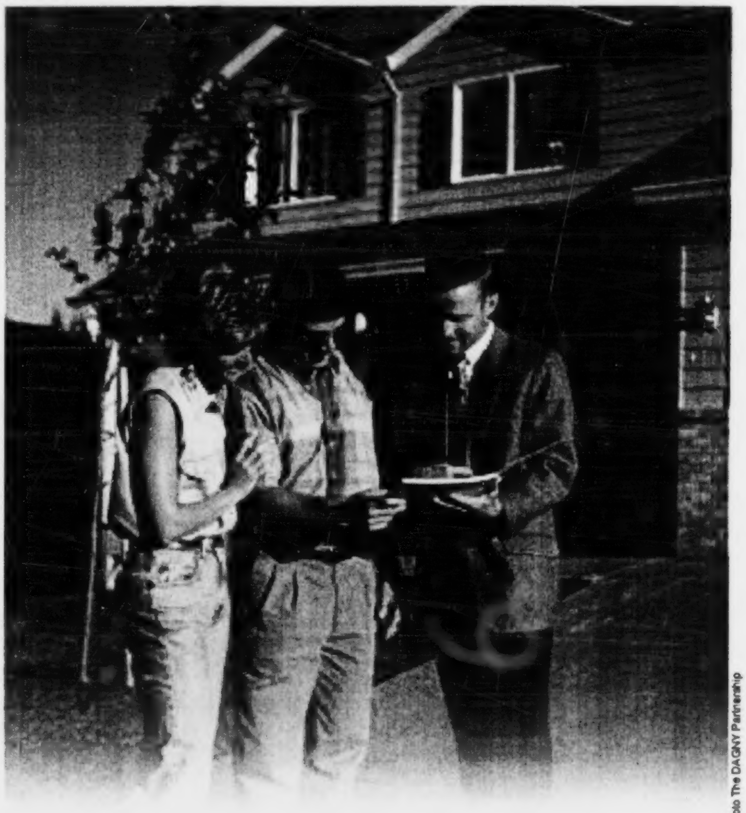


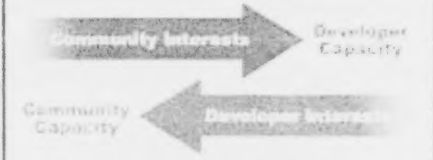
Photo The DAGNY Partnership

Why bother trying to reduce conflict?

Conflict costs everyone! It costs the residents and the developer time, money and valuable goodwill. It also forces City Council to choose one position over another, creating an environment of winners and losers.

Most importantly it inhibits the development of the best solutions that will result in a strong sustainable community.

Consultation helps to reduce conflict by finding matches between the interests of one participant and the capacity of the other to fulfill them.



A Win/Win Scenario

Graphic The DAGNY Partnership

This 'interest based' approach to negotiations is more effective in most situations, but especially important in development situations with a complex combination of stakeholders.

Consultation Decision Framework Proposed

There is no one, perfect consultation process for all projects. Therefore, the approach is to offer a consultation decision-making framework that assists the City, community and developers plan the right tactics, at the right time, for the right project.

The framework encourages all participants to learn, understand, discuss and then formulate solutions.

The process starts with three fundamental "building" blocks.

1. Political will
2. Credibility and effective working relationships
3. A public educated on basic land-use planning

Photo City of Edmonton

Building on this foundation, the framework moves all participants through a series of stages that enhance information gathering on the specific project and structure opportunities for informed input to the proposal.

It identifies the need for evaluation points to keep the process on track.

The individual tactics highlighted in this example, balance the stakeholder consultation needs with the scale, scope and implications of the project.

Through each phase of the activity there is a communication loop. This reminds participants to share information with their broader communities.

Photo The DAGNY Partnership

A Consultation Framework offers participants a consistent but flexible process that can be modified to meet the individual needs of a specific project.

When the project is straightforward, with nominal impacts, the process is streamlined.

When the project is complex, with significant impacts, the process can be expanded to facilitate more comprehensive dialogue, problem-solving or community mediation approach.

3.0 PROCESS "FIT" FOR EDMONTON

Framework sequencing important

The Consultation Framework sequences activities and problem-solving in a manner that encourages participants to learn, understand and then formulate positions and solutions. This orderly process to the decision point is a key to success.

Incorrect sequencing of activities leads to pre-mature entrenched positions being formulated on inaccurate information. Once positions are formulated, change is seen as a compromise and is resisted. Therefore, the sequencing of the tactics is as important as the tactics chosen to facilitate the input.

Framework is only as good as the people using it

The success or failure of any consultation process is influenced by the judgment, skills and attitudes of the participants.

When participants look to the "rules or legislation" for the minimum consultation required, rather than assess the project for what is needed to complete the task effectively – the process fails.

When participants rely on the standard tactics; rather than assessing the need and choosing the right tactic – the process fails.

The Consultation Framework will deliver better outcomes if participants are willing and have the skills to manage the process effectively.

Participants need new consultation toolbox

Participants need a toolbox of 'engagement' tools and tactics that can stimulate informed discussion, help partners identify their interests and find mutually agreeable solutions.

Approaches within this consultation toolbox are as varied as the issues that they work to address.

Examples of these consultation techniques include:

- individual neighbourhood "kitchen" table discussions,
- design charettes,
- community visioning sessions,
- computer simulated modeling demonstrations that immediately show the impact of solutions,
- open house variations,
- round table discussion groups on individual issues,
- site tours of similar sites with stakeholders,
- interest-based mediation with a neutral facilitator,
- public surveys and focus groups,
- web-based discussion pages and/or chat rooms.

City staff, community members and applicants need to be comfortable with various techniques and better understand the best time to utilize them.

As the process should reflect the needs of the project, the technique chosen needs to fit the desired outcome.

Photo Economic Development Edmonton

Consultation requires team work and a shared commitment towards common goals.

Shifting the attitudes of all participants from doing the "minimum under the legislation", to doing "what is the most effective based on the project" will enhance consultation.

Consultation Framework – The Basics

Phase 1 – The Foundation

The Framework's foundation includes three core "building blocks".

1. Political will and direction

This requires:

- Consistency of political decisions on land development.
- Clear, articulated and consistently applied political will that validates effective consultation in land-use development decisions.
- Support of approved neighbourhood plans and reluctance to change unless demonstrated gain for the community.

Political will is a fundamental requirement; however within the scope of this scenario it will not be addressed beyond stating the need for it.

2. Enhancing credibility and effective working relationships

This requires:

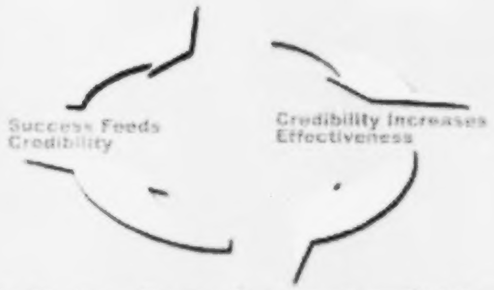
- A working relationship based on trust and respect between City planners, the community and the development industry.
  - City planners should not be perceived as an agent for any one community or business interest.
- Clearly understood roles and responsibilities for all the participants in the development process, especially the Planning and Development Department.
  - This is enhanced when planners have community profile on general planning issues, not only when they are dealing with a specific developer's application.

Photo The DAGNY Partnership

The Planning and Development Department maintains a reasonable level of credibility, although it has been strained because of previous, controversial projects. To meet the current and anticipated development needs, the relationship between the City, the community and the development industry needs to be strengthened.

Credibility and an effective working relationship are significantly influenced by the cumulative result of effectively managing public engagement. It is important for the City to have a visible leadership role in selected activities, particularly the community education component.

This will strengthen relationships within the community and provide opportunities for Planning staff to build a stronger community network.


Success Feeds Credibility
Credibility Increases Effectiveness

Nurturing Consultation Credibility

Graphic The DAGNY Partnership

3.0 PROCESS "FIT" FOR EDMONTON (continued)

Photo Economic Development Edmonton

3. Creating communities that are educated in basic land-use planning.

This requires:

- Improved understanding of the basics of land-use planning, who is involved, how it works and what are the limitations within the process.

The Planning and Development Department currently produces several "plain language" publications on the planning process and offers the information readily through its web-site and offices. These support tools are useful, however, they need to be enhanced with a proactive education and communication program.

Smart Choice Planning Certificate

This program would increase Planning's profile in the community while enhancing the basic level of understanding of the planning process, the opportunities and the restraints.

While the EFCL has offered a series of workshops, that mirror Calgary's successful "Partners in Planning" program, the participation to date has been low.

We propose that the City work with the EFCL and other organizations active in the development process, including resident and condo associations, to strengthen and expand this program.

A multi-course certificate program increases the credibility of the program in the eyes of the participants.

This certificate program would create a network of community volunteers that have a better understanding of the process and can provide more informed input on behalf of their communities.

The City of Edmonton has used this model very successfully in other program areas such as the successful "Master Composter Program". Through this program the Department has built additional volunteer resources to work in the community and be champions for this important civic priority.

A "Smart Choice Planning Certificate" could achieve a similar result in the land-use planning area.

To complement this program an annual communication strategy is recommended to proactively educate Edmontonians on the civic priorities impacting the design and development of our communities.

While these foundation elements may not guarantee success, the absence of them will inhibit it.

Phase 2 – Information Gathering through to Decision-making Phases

With a solid foundation in place, the community is better equipped to deal with individual applications that arise.

The next phase of the process kicks in when an application or a planning proposal is under review.

The scale, scope and community impact of the project under consideration will define the nature of the consultation activities. ***The greater or wider the impact – the greater and wider the consultation needs to be.***

Evaluation and Communication Points

At key points in the Framework all stakeholders should ask –

- Do we have enough information to move on to the next phase?
- Are all the stakeholders at the table and have they been heard?
- Do we have solutions that can be supported?

If the answer is yes then participants should move on to the next phase. If the answer is no, then participants should increase their information base or revisit outstanding issues before going to the next phase.

When does the consultation process end? Ultimately it is when Council is willing to make a decision on an application; however it is usually when the reasonableness test applies. This is when there has been a reasonable opportunity for all the stakeholders to be heard, legitimate issues worked through and the solutions proposed in the application have a reasonable level of support.

Alternately, consultation ends, when the two parties are so entrenched in opposite positions that further consultation will not move them any closer to agreement. In this case Council is left to decide or direct an arbitration or negotiation process.

The Framework reminds all the participants to communicate the work or progress to their broader communities.

Keeping people informed, enhances their understanding and encourages future participation.

Photo Economic Development Edmonton

Impact on the approved Plan drives level of consultation

The objective is to ensure that individual planning decisions are not made in isolation to the overall City or neighbourhood vision.

The ASP/NSP should guide the activities and reflect the agreed upon neighbourhood atmosphere… not vice versa.

Consultation Framework Scenarios

Two development scenarios have been identified to reflect how the Framework would work with these common generic applications. The scenarios highlighted below are illustrated over the following pages.

Consultation Framework 1 – Application complies with the approved Plan

In this scenario we have increased the **emphasis on the information sharing phase**. This would ensure residents have an accurate understanding of the approved Plan, the progress of the application and the decision-making process.

While there are engagement activities they are modest because the application is in line with the intent of the approved Plan.

Consultation Framework 2 – Application amendments do not comply with the approved Plan

When changes are envisioned to the approved Plan, a more ***significant engagement phase should occur.***

This expanded engagement phase would ensure that both the landowner and the community have their interests and options fairly considered.

3.0 PROCESS "FIT" FOR EDMONTON (continued)

Consultation Framework 1

Application Complies with Approved Plan

Current Process

Political Will and Direction

Current Approved Plans

Circulation of the application to over 15 stakeholder departments and organizations

Written notification to impacted property owners

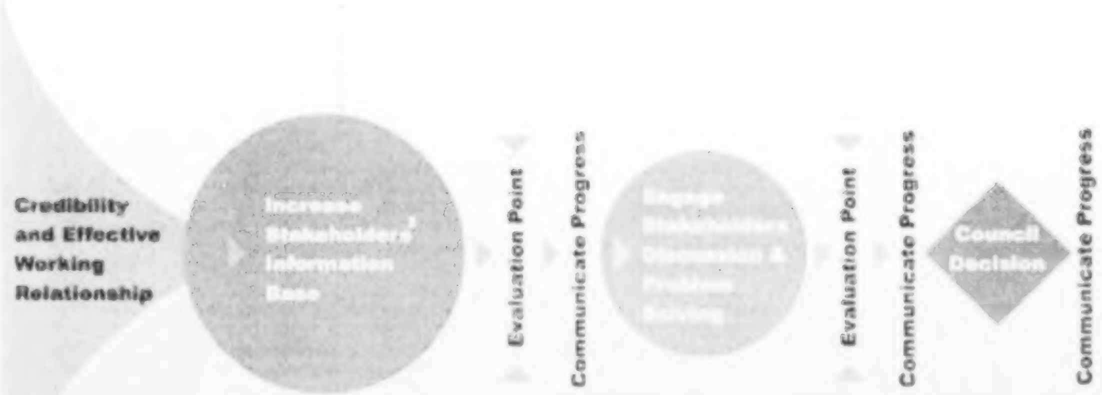
Individual stakeholders and special interest group stakeholder meetings may occur, but usually not if the proposal complies with the plan

Statutory notice of Public Hearing

City summarizes consultation in Council report

Statutory Public Hearing

Credibility and Effective Working Relationship


Increase Stakeholders' Information Base
Evaluation Point
Communicate Progress
Engage Stakeholders Discussion & Problem Solving
Evaluation Point
Communicate Progress
Council Decision
Communicate Progress

Public Educated in Land Use Planning Issues

Smart Choice Planning Certificate

City to provide a copy of the ASP/NASP/NSP to all new homeowners

City to scan the community environment to ensure that the written notification on rezoning reflects the impacted stakeholders, not only a mandatory minimum distance

Provide signage in plain language

Consider Open House format as an alternate to a Public Meeting

- Minimum of 3 weeks notice
- Ensure applicant provides written handouts on the proposal

Post a summary of the application information and a feedback form on Planning's web site

Proposed Changes

TIMELINE

ONGOING

4 - 6 MONTHS

Graphic The DAGNY Partnership

Consultation Framework 2

Rezoning Requiring Substantial Amendments to the Approved Plan

Current Process

Political Will and Direction

Current Approved Plans

Circulation of the application to over 30 stakeholder departments and organizations

Written notification to impacted property owners

Signage on the identified property

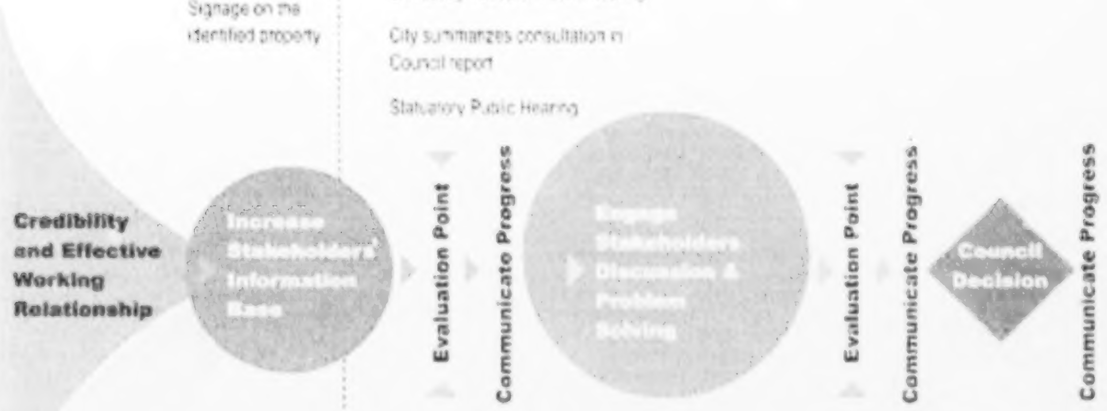
Individual stakeholders and special interest group stakeholder meetings

Public Meeting - review the proposal, planning process, land use implications and decision-making process
- Key departmental reps, Councilors and developer attend
- Handout material provided

Statutory notice of Public Hearing

City summarizes consultation in Council report

Statutory Public Hearing


Credibility and Effective Working Relationship
Increase Stakeholders' Information Base
Evaluation Point
Communicate Progress
Engage Stakeholders Discussion & Problem Solving
Evaluation Point
Communicate Progress
Council Decision
Communicate Progress

City to provide a copy of the ASP/NASP and NSP to all new homeowners

Planning identifies the preliminary issues and develops a consultation plan identifying City and applicant requirements

Written notification on rezoning to all the impacted stakeholders and not simply the mandatory minimum distribution

Planning hosts a community meeting to outline the proposed consultation process, clarify roles and establish a Community Advisory Commitee

Use plain language and the web address on site signs

Implementation of the agreed Consultation Plan. Elements **COULD** include
- Community Conference
- Issue Workshops
- Design Charette
- Open Houses
- Interactive web site for on-line input
- Site tours
- Focus Groups
- Mail back surveys
- Public Meeting to share the Community Advisory's recommendations

Expanded Consultation Summary submitted to Council, prior to the Public Hearing

Public Educated in Land Use Planning Issues

Smart Choice Planning Certificate

Proposed Changes

TIMELINE ONGOING

6 - 7 MONTHS

Graphic: The DAGNY Partnership

3.0 PROCESS "FIT" FOR EDMONTON (continued)

Consultation Framework 1

Application Complies with Approved Plan

Current Process

Political Will and Direction

Current Approved Plans

Circulation of the application to over 15 stakeholder departments and organizations

Written notification to impacted property owners

Individual stakeholders and special interest group stakeholder meetings may occur but usually not if the proposal complies with the plan

Statutory notice of Public Hearing

City recommendation on rezoning to Council

Statutory Public Hearing

Credibility and Effective Working Relationship

Evaluation Point
Communicate Progress
Evaluation Point
Communicate Progress
Communicate Progress

Public Educated in Land Use Planning Issues

Smart Choice Planning Certificate

City to provide a copy of the ASP/NASP/NSP to all new homeowners

City to scan the community environment to ensure that the written notification on rezoning reflects the impacted stakeholders, not only a mandatory minimum distance

Provide signage in plain language

Consider Open House formats as an alternative to a Public Meeting

- Minimum of 3 weeks notice
- Ensure applicant provides written handouts on the proposal

Post a summary of the application information and a feedback form on Planning's web site

Proposed Changes

Graphic The DAGNY Partnership

TIMELINE

ONGOING

4 - 6 MONTHS

Consultation Framework 2

Rezoning Requiring Substantial Amendments to the Approved Plan

Current Process

Political Will and Direction

Current Approved Plan

Circulation of the application to over 30 stakeholder [illegible] and organizations

Written notification to impacted property owners

Signage on the [illegible] property

Individual stakeholder and special interest group stakeholder meetings

Public Meeting: [illegible] the proposal [illegible] planning process
- [illegible] land developer attend
- [illegible]

Statutory notice of Public Hearing

City [illegible] consultation summary report

Statutory Public Hearing

Credibility and Effective Working Relationship

Evaluation Point

Communicate Progress

Evaluation Point

Communicate Progress

Communicate Progress

Public Educated in Land Use Planning Issues

Smart Choices Planning Certificate

City to provide copies of the Approved [illegible] consultation

Planning identifies the stakeholders / issues and develops a consultation plan identifying City and applicant responsibilities

Written notification on rezoning to all the impacted stakeholders and not simply the mandatory minimum distribution

Planning hosts a community meeting to outline the proposed consultation process, clarify roles and establish a Community Advisory Committee

Use plain language and the web address on site signs

Implementation of the approved Consultation Plan [illegible] COULD include:
- Community [illegible]
- Issue Workshops
- Design Charrette
- Open Houses
- Interactive web site for on-line input
- Site tours
- Focus Groups
- Mail back surveys
- Public Meeting to share the Community Advisory's recommendations

Expanded Consultation Summary submitted to Council prior to the Public Hearing

Proposed Changes

Graphic: The DAGNY Partnership

TIMELINE

ONGOING

6 - 7 MONTHS

4.0 IMPLEMENTATION REQUIREMENTS & APPLICATION CONSIDERATIONS

The following chart highlights tools and tactics identified in the two consultation frameworks discussed. As stressed, there is no one cookie cutter approach and the issues and implications should drive the final process design. However there are some tactics that are more appropriate to support Framework 2. The framework that each tactic relates to is noted by Framework 1 (F1) and Framework 2 (F2).

Proposed Tactics	Implementation	Application Considerations
Foundation Phase		
Smart Choice Planning Certificate program (F1 & F2)	Planning staff lead the program design and implementation Content provides the basics of land-use planning in Edmonton Partner with community organizations including the EFCL, resident, condo associations and any business associations active in planning	Held annually Target communities with redevelopment on the horizon Based on currently successful model of citizen engagement (Partners in Planning – Calgary; Waste Master Composters – Edmonton)
A proactive communication program (F1 & F2)	Increase the awareness of the land development priorities of the City of Edmonton Program includes support material, more effective grassroots distribution and community outreach activities Implemented in partnership with "graduates" in the Smart Choice Planning Certificate program	Annual program targeted to residents and stakeholder organizations Could be City-wide or targeted to neighbourhoods where development activity is anticipated
Information Phase		
- Provide a copy of the Plan to all new homeowners (F1 & F2)	- City to produce and print the maps - This could be done by the City or by the developer for the City when selling the property	- Distributed on the purchase of a new lot or home - Promote Plans in community newsletters
- Community Issue Identification and Target Audience Scan (F1 & F2)	- Input gathered through stakeholder circulation and internal departmental feedback - Develop a simple contact database of community contacts that staff can use to "keep in touch" - Annual "community round table" discussion to keep staff "connected" to the current and emerging community and development issues - Applicant to formally identify issues that have been raised through consultation as a part of the application	- Ongoing process of "keeping the community pulse" - Formal issue identification process should be used when significant impact will occur as a result of the proposed changes

- Development of formal consultation plan (F2)	- Planning, in consultation with the community and the applicant, develop formal consultation plan
	- Utilize staff or consultants that are trained in community consultation
	- May require additional or re-allocated financial resources
		- When the scale, scope and impact of the potential changes are significant
		- Happens at the very beginning of the process
		  - Usually requires 6-12 months to decision phase
		  - Too long a process is counterproductive

Proposed Tactics	Implementation	Application Considerations
Information Phase (continued)		
- Stakeholder Consultation Summary (F1 & F2)	- Direct mail a summary of the process, proposed timelines and contact information - Ensure the "implications" of the recommendations are included and explained in plain language	- Occur as a follow up from preliminary meetings - Prior to Public Hearing
- Project web site (F1 & F2)	- Provides the information on the progress of the project and a feedback loop to Planning - Additional resources would be required to set up and manage the site	- Occur as a follow up from preliminary meetings - Could be on either the City site or a separate site
Engagement Phase		

- Implement the agreed Consultation Plan (F2)	- Planning, in consultation with the community and the applicant, implement the agreed to consultation plan
	- Utilize staff or consultants that are trained in community consultation to support the planners
	  - A variety of consultation and communication techniques should be considered within the plan.
	- Progress evaluation of the effectiveness of the consultation program should occur to ensure it stays on track
		- When the ASP/NASP and/or NSP are being changed
		- The scale, scope and impact of the potential changes are significant including impacts on traffic, nature of the community, demographic changes to the neighbourhood or types of land use development
		- Usually requires 6-12 months depending on the issues and time of year
		  - Too long a process is counterproductive

- Consultation Communication Plan (F2)	- Tools could include information on the web-site, a simple project "newsletter", a project presentation, updates in the local community newsletter - Some additional financial resources may be required to support the activity	- Communication should align with key decision-points - "Project" communication tools to support individual partners communicating with their groups
- Consultation Summary (F2)	- Applicant and Planning to provide summary of their consultation activities to incorporate into a report for Council	- Both summaries provided to Council prior to the Public Hearing would be public information
Decision-making Phase		
- Decision Communication Plan (F1 & F2)	- Planning to thank participants and inform the impacted community of the decisions	- Information mailed following the Council decision

5.0 OUTCOMES

The Consultation Framework shifts the current emphasis from reacting to applications to creating an environment that supports community interaction. The following highlights some of the Consultation Framework's outcomes for the key stakeholders.

Stakeholders	Positive Outcomes	Negative Outcomes
City of Edmonton – Planning	Empowers participation Builds committed residents with the skills to provide more effective input Creates a community network that the City can tap into May save time in appeals Reduces community confrontation – less stress Minimizes Council's role as an arbitrator Generates smarter development solutions that serve a wider community	May need more staff May need additional funds May need different types of staff or consultants
Land development industry	Focuses input on specific projects, rather than being a lighting rod for "other" civic issues Provides transparent, consistent direction on the process expected Provides flexibility Minimizes conflict through decision-making process Reduced appeals – both time and costs Input early is more cost effective to manage Constructive input within the defined parameters of the planning process is easier to deal with Can tap into community skill base	Reduces industry influence Projects may change impacting the return on investment Takes time and different skills
Local residents	Better understanding improves the quality of the input and the effect on the decision-making process Earlier participation in the process increases the input's effectiveness Increases community skill and contact base Empowers communities to take more ownership of the development decisions	Takes time Takes a willingness to find alternatives
Community as a whole	Creates smarter solutions embraced by more of the community Creates a stronger community partnership between residents, stakeholder organizations, the City and the development community Creates more committed residents with a greater sense of community ownership	Takes a different resource allocation

This approach achieves these outcomes by increasing the emphasis on:

- community education – from both the resident and the development perspective;
- skilled consultation processes that foster community solutions rather than community battles;
- nurturing input that respects the rights and responsibilities of the landowners, local residents and community at large; and
- building important "social capital and community engagement skills" with more stakeholders contributing to a greater sense of community ownership and pride.

Consultation will never eliminate disagreement.

It will however, provide a structure for a wider number of impacted participants to understand and work through the issues, constraints and opportunities in a timely manner.

SmartChoices
for developing our community

IDEA NINE

Redevelopment Process

Cover Photo: The DAGNY Partnership

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Photo The DAGNY Partnership

This scenario proposes a proactive consultation framework to support redevelopment projects involving 40 or more residential units. This scale of development impacts existing neighbourhoods, infrastructure and business, making an effective planning and consultation framework essential.

While the fundamentals of effective consultation remain the same for any type of land development, redevelopment projects are often the most challenging. They require special care and attention.

This approach highlights the "foundation elements" required to support redevelopment projects. This provides a structured decision-making process to be used by all stakeholders to plan and implement more effective community consultation.

It stresses the importance of proactively planning redevelopment for targeted areas ***first***. This puts in place an approved framework for redevelopment and reduces both developer and community uncertainty.

The consultation approach then focuses all the stakeholders to invest time up front to identify and understand the issues, and build a better base of information for all the priority stakeholders before moving into the specific application review and problem-solving phases.

While this process may require some additional time and potentially a different skill set to implement it, the ***Smart Choice benefits include:***

1. Creating *smarter* community decision-making

Effective consultation offers the opportunity for all interested stakeholders to provide input into the decision-making process – not only the vocal or influential few. It uses community resources and goodwill more constructively by fostering an informed dialogue rather than reacting to community battle lines.

Smart decision-makers take time to understand their environment, learn about the interests of others and explore various options before formulating their position. The approach presented here mirrors this decision-making structure.

2. *Smarter* problem-solving to foster vitality

Effective engagement connects the community. New skills, different experiences and alternate solutions are brought to the discussion table. The result is a more enriched community with development solutions that create a strong sustainable community that will stand the test of time.

This process also builds valuable "social capital" with residents, resulting in a greater sense of community ownership and pride.

3. Enhancing clarity for redevelopment

This approach stresses the need for informed participants who have a basic understanding of land use planning, the interests of the respective stakeholders and the priorities of the Ciy of Edmonton.

By improving the clarity around civic policies, respective interests, legal rights and obligations and approved community and civic direction the consultation process can focus interaction to develop sustainable solutions and stronger comunity connections between business, the residents and the City.

Effective consultation…

…means proactive planning and preparation to get it right.

…takes commitment by all stakeholders to participate in an open and honest manner.

…accepts that not everyone will agree, as long as everyone is fairly heard and considered.

…leads to timely decisions that are "smarter for our community" because they are embraced by more of our community.

1.0 INTRODUCTION (continued)

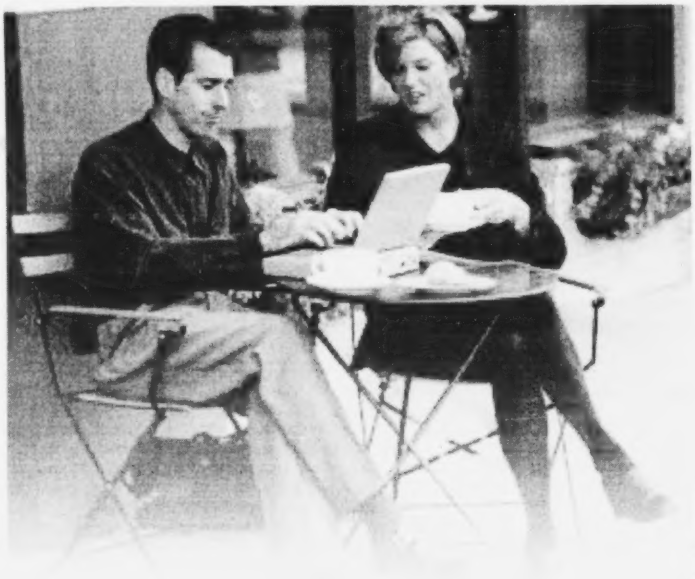


Photo The DAGNY Partnership

Start with a *smart* redevelopment plan

A neighbourhood has a life cycle just like its residents. Over the years residential trends change, demographics shift and residents have different needs. This makes many of our mature neighbourhoods prime candidates for redevelopment.

The right kind of redevelopment can revitalize an aging neighbourhood while the wrong kind can destroy it.

For significant redevelopment to be successful, it starts with a clearly articulated political vision around the redevelopment - what is the City trying to achieve as well as key areas of opportunity or restraints.

With broad policy direction, individual neighbourhoods are well placed to develop Area Redevelopment Plans (ARP) that will convert the broad City principles into a working reality at the local level.

This approach proposes proactive neighbourhood redevelopment planning before a neighbourhood faces major redevelopment applications.

This allows the City and neighbourhoods to collaboratively define the nature and scope of the change they want, rather than having a particular application drive the planning direction for the City or the neighbourhood.

Grow *smarter* communities

Land will be redeveloped and Edmonton's City Council will ultimately decide what form that redevelopment takes. Constructive input offers the opportunity to influence Council as they strive to balance the rights of the landowner, impacted community and City as a whole. Council wants the "best long-term fit" for the whole community.

However to be constructive, input must be timely and informed. Participants need a solid base of understanding about the rights, responsibilities, scope and limitations inherent in Edmonton's land development process.

This approach proposes an increased emphasis on:

- proactive neighbourhood redevelopment planning,
- enhanced community education in land development issues,
- enhanced understanding of civic priorities towards redevelopment issues,
- a consistent but flexible approach focused towards project outcomes,
- better consultation skills for all the participants,
- nurturing accountability that respects the rights and responsibilities of the landowners, local residents and the community at large.

Even smart change isn't easy

Land redevelopment creates change and any change creates reaction.

Effective consultation strives to channel this reaction into constructive community problem-solving.

2.0 DISCUSSION

Understanding the Current Situation

Over the last 75 years many of Edmonton's "close to the center" neighbourhoods have evolved.

- At occasional points in a neighbourhood's history, planning activity may have occurred either through ad hoc rezoning applications or through a formal Area Redevelopment Plan (ARP).
- Most nieghbourhoods (circa 1905 - 1940) have had an ARP completed and approved at some time.
- Most neighbourhoods (circa 1940 - 1970) do not have an ARP.
- Neighbourhoods developed after 1970 generally have Area Structure Plans (ASP) and/or Neighbourhood Area Structure Plans (NASP) approved that broadly define the approved land use. Some of these will have been modified over the years to respond to specific applications for rezoning (re-districting) and the changing needs of the community.

Prior to the Council decisions on redevelopment projects, stakeholders are offered several opportunities to review the proposals and identify issues, opportunities and alternatives for consideration.

The approximate timeframe for these activities:

- ***ASP – 12 - 24 months***
- ***NSP & NASP – 6 - 8 months***
- ***ARP – 7 - 15 months***

Current Public Notification and Consultation

City Planning and Development requires stakeholder consultation as a part of the development of statutory plans. For an ARP, Planning would undertake this directly. In other situations, Planning may require the applicant to undertake community consultation.

For rezoning applications, Planning may facilitate a public meeting if the scale, scope and impact of the project warrants.

For any development plan, formal consultation occurs with two groups:

Technical and Formal Stakeholders

Applications and plans are circulated to a broad list of 15-30 stakeholder departments and organizations. Each is given 3 – 4 weeks to provide input on the proposed application or plan.

This circulation list could include civic departments such as Transportation and Streets and Community Services; Capital Health; all of the utilities; impacted Community League and/or the Federation of Community League's central Planning Committee.

The "General" Community

All plan approval and rezoning currently include the following:

- written notification to adjacent landowners and/or impacted property owners within the plan area;
- a public meeting (optional);
- written notification to adjacent landowners within the plan area of the upcoming Public Hearing;
- newspaper advertisement of the Statutory Public Hearing; and
- Statutory Public Hearing in front of Council.

When preparing an ARP there are a significant number of stakeholders to be considered.

This process requires more complex consultation often including:

- Public Meeting to introduce the project and process;
- the establishment of a Community Advisory Committee (CAC) or a planning committee of the community league;
- meetings to identify issues, options and alternatives; and
- several open houses or public meetings to update the community on the progress.

Key difference between redevelopment and new development

A significant difference between the development of new land and redevelopment of land in existing neighbourhoods is the nature of stakeholder interaction. The process is the same, however implementing it can be more challenging because the developer must deal with significantly more impacted stakeholders and often more complex issues including financial implications, infrastructure capacity and impact of traffic, and environmental and social issues that affect the community and city as a whole.

2.0 DISCUSSION (continued)

Factors Impacting the Current Redevelopment Consultation Process

Six important factors impact the effectiveness of the consultation process in redevelopment initiatives:

1. Many people who live in a mature neighbourhood assume that it won't change.
2. Residents and landowners may not have the same interests. Renters may worry about availability, cost and traffic, whereas landowners may worry about property values.
3. Very few neighbourhoods have a current plan. Most plans are over 10 years old and may not necessarily reflect the current market. Only 21 neighbourhoods are covered under an ARP.
4. Most redevelopment occurs in the middle of developed areas, therefore increasing the complexity of the stakeholder interaction.
5. The nature of the neighbourhood or the redevelopment proposal may trigger city-wide interest by social, cultural or environmental interest groups.
6. The skills of people managing the consultation process may be lacking, leading to community conflict rather than mutually beneficial solutions.

Photo Economic Development Edmonton

Community Reaction – Why does it occur?

One of the most common reactions to redevelopment is the question 'why here', commonly known as the 'not in my backyard' (NIMBY) response. The strength and intensity of the reaction may vary, but effective redevelopment planning needs to anticipate and work through the issues that contribute to this common community reaction. The following highlights some reasons why people react.

- **Change triggers fear.**
  - Some people fear the change will be negative.
  - Some react simply because change will create something different.
- Lack of knowledge of the impacts and alternatives. Pre-conceived negative stereotypes of what "different" types of development can offer.
- Reputation of the City and the developer based on previous experience.
- Both residents and developers may have unrealistic expectations on what they can achieve – either to change the neighbourhood or contain any change in the neighbourhood.
- Some communities feel that they have "done their bit" to absorb higher density or less popular uses.

Proactive redevelopment planning with targeted neighbourhoods

It is reasonable to expect that neighbourhoods will evolve over time. Change is inevitable. It can be driven by the municipality's need to rehabilitate aging infrastructure, maximize the use of existing infrastructure or improve the quality of life for residents.

A landowner may trigger change to capitalize on new market opportunities or residents may drive the change to improve their neighbourhood and its amenities.

All three groups, the City, residents and landowners, have the right to influence what this change looks like.

Other stakeholders also have the right to have their issues heard and responded to in a timely, consistent, fair and transparent manner.

To ensure that all stakeholders' can influence the future vision of the community, ***the approach proposes the Planning and Development Department proactively target communities and spearhead the ARP process.*** This would ensure that the community has an approved vision with which to assess any individual redevelopment applications.

The City should work with the development community to identify and prioritize neighbourhoods that are prime for development so that these plans can be put in place promptly.

Proactive area redevelopment planning provides a degree of certainty for all stakeholders

Urban land use planning in our community is a dynamic exercise and guaranteed specific outcomes are unrealistic. However, by using the area redevelopment planning process the City can reduce the uncertainty for both the developer and the community.

The plan defines areas of expectations and boundaries of acceptable development. It is within this approved framework that the consultation of a specific redevelopment application then occurs.

The discussion can then be focused towards fine-tuning best-fit solutions around 'what will be developed' rather than fighting 'any development'. This dramatically reduces the potential conflict of the redevelopment process.

This will not alleviate conflict that arises when either the community or the developer blatantly ignores the scale and scope of the land use and direction within an ARP. In these cases, Council needs to support the combined efforts of all the stakeholders who developed and agreed to the ARP. They need to communicate to those who ignore approved plans that their tactics will not be supported.

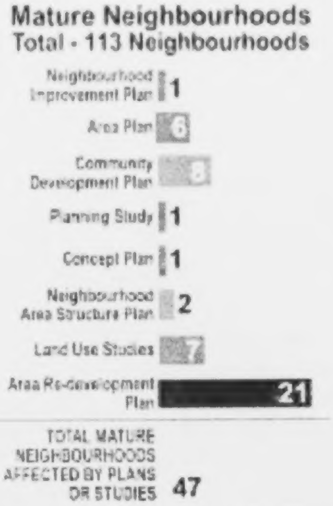
Photo Economic Development Edmonton

These plans need to reflect realistic market conditions as well as the community vision.

Once approved, all parties in the development process should honour the intent of the ARP acknowledging that individual elements might be adjusted.

This ensures that individual planning decisions are not made in isolation from the overall city and neighbourhood vision.

The ARP should guide the activities and reflect the agreed upon neighbourhood atmosphere…not vice versa.



City of Edmonton

2.0 DISCUSSION (continued)

Photo The DAGNY Partnership

Conflict inherent in land development

Conflict is inherent in land development – especially redevelopment projects. However, conflict, when managed effectively, can contribute to the generation of alternate solutions that create more benefits for more stakeholders.

With Edmonton's growing pressure on its municipal infrastructure, communities need to ensure the most efficient use of the existing land base.

The Planning and Development Department must nurture an environment that will effectively manage and support these change pressures.

Creating this environment is an ongoing process and is fundamental to establishing an effective working relationship between all parties.

As the land development process becomes more defined, the potential for conflict rises; and the greater the need for a working relationship between all the stakeholders that is based on knowledge and respect.

Why bother trying to reduce conflict?

Conflict costs everyone! It costs the residents and the developer time, money and valuable goodwill. It also forces City Council to choose one position over another, creating an environment of winners and losers.

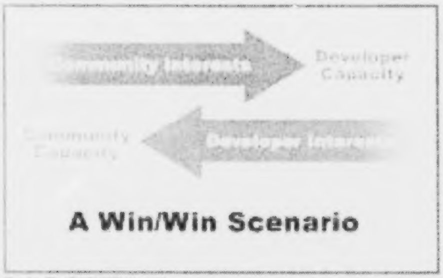
Most importantly it inhibits the development of the best solutions that will result in a strong sustainable community.

Consultation helps to reduce conflict by finding matches between the interests of one participant and the capacity of the other to fulfill them.

Creating A Win/Win Scenario

By focusing dialogue between stakeholders on their "interests", rather than their "positions", there is a greater chance of avoiding the community battles so evident in some projects.

This 'interest based' approach to negotiations is more effective in most situations, but especially important in redevelopment situations as outlined in this scenario. This approach avoids the pitfalls of potential red herring issues taking over the negotiations, leaving the real issues unresolved.



Graphic The DAGNY Partnership

This 'interest based' approach to negotiations is more effective in most situations, but especially important in redevelopment situations as outlined in this scenario.

When does the Consultation Process end?

Ultimately it is when Council is willing to make a decision on an application; however it is usually when the reasonableness test applies.

This is when there has been a reasonable opportunity for all the stakeholders to be heard, legitimate issues worked through and the solutions proposed in the application have a reasonable level of support.

Alternately, consultation ends, when the two parties are so entrenched in opposite position that further consultation will not move them any closer to agreement. In this case Council is left to decide or direct an arbitration or negotiation process.

Consultation Decision Framework Proposed

There is no one, perfect consultation process for all projects. Therefore, this approach offers a consultation framework that assists the City, community and developers plan the right tactics, at the right time, for the right project.

The framework encourages all participants to learn, understand, discuss and then formulate solutions.

The process starts with three fundamental "building" blocks.

1. Political will
2. Credibility and effective working relationships
3. A public educated on basic land-use planning

Photo The DAGNY Partnership

Building on this foundation, the framework:

- moves all participants through a series of stages that enhance information gathering on the specific project;
- structures opportunities for informed input to the proposal; and
- highlights the need for periodic evaluation points to ensure that the process stays on track.

The individual tools in this example balance the stakeholder consultation needs with the scale, scope and implications of the project.

Through each phase of the activity there is a communication and feedback loop. This reminds participants to share information with their broader community.

A Consultation Framework offers participants a consistent but flexible process that can be modified to meet the individual needs of a specific project.

When the project is straightforward, with nominal impacts, the process is streamlined.

When the project is complex, with significant impacts or a wide range of impacted stakeholders, the process can be expanded to facilitate a more comprehensive dialogue, problem-solving or community mediation approach.

3.0 PROCESS "FIT" FOR EDMONTON

Framework sequencing important

The Consultation Framework sequences activities and problem-solving in a manner that encourages participants to learn and understand and then formulate positions and solutions. This orderly process leading to the decision point is key to success.

Incorrect sequencing of activities leads to pre-mature entrenched positions being formulated on inaccurate information. Once positions are formulated, change is seen as a compromise and is resisted. The sequencing of the tactics is as important as the tactics themselves.

Framework is only as good as the people using it

The success or failure of any ***consultation process is influenced by the judgment, skills and attitudes of the participants.***

When participants look to the "rules or legislation" for the minimum consultation required, rather than assess the project for what is needed to complete the task effectively – the process fails.

When participants rely on the standard tactics; rather than assessing the need and choosing the right tactic – the process fails.

The Consultation Framework will deliver better outcomes if participants are willing and have the skills to manage the process effectively.

Participants need a new consultation toolbox

Participants need a toolbox of 'engagement' tools and tactics that can stimulate informed discussion, help partners identify their interests and find mutually agreeable solutions.

Approaches within this consultation toolbox are as varied as the issues that they work to address.

Examples of these consultation techniques include:

- individual neighbourhood "kitchen" table discussions,
- design charettes,
- community visioning sessions,
- computer simulated modeling that immediately show the impact of solutions,
- open house variations,
- round table discussion groups on individual issues,
- site tours of similar sites,
- interest based mediation with a neutral facilitator,
- public surveys and focus groups,
- web-based discussion pages and/or chat rooms.

Photo Economic Development Edmonton

Consultation can lead to an improved urban atmosphere.

City staff, community members and applicants need to be comfortable using various consultation and information sharing techniques. They must also better understand the best time to use them. ***The process should reflect the needs of the project and the technique used fit the desired outcome.***

Shifting the attitudes of civic staff, developers, residents and special interest groups from doing the "minimum under the legislation" to doing "what is the most effective" based on the specific project and long term interest of the community will enhance consultation.

Community knowledge critical in redevelopment projects

Ensuring the right people are at the table can make or break any process.

Mature, established neighbourhoods often have a wide range of organizations that actively work in the community.

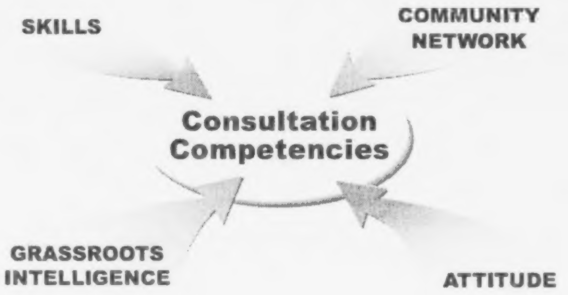
Traditionally the City has used local community league contacts, Business Revitalization Zone managers or other community-based organizations to ensure community input.

These organizations are important stakeholders and can speak for a portion of the community. However, in specific redevelopment applications, it is very dangerous to assume that they will represent all the interests in the community.

The City needs stronger community connections in areas prime for redevelopment to assist in identifying the informal community leaders and impacted stakeholders.

The development of ARPs for targeted communities can provide current insights into the community and the influencers that will need to be consulted when specific applications come forward.

Key players need to be involved early in the process or they create ninth-hour "stop the development" advocacy groups. These groups can create emotionally charged community debates that can be costly for everyone to work through.



Graphic The DAGNY Partnership

Consultation Framework – The Basics

Phase 1 – The Foundation

The Framework's foundation includes three core "building blocks".

1) Political will and direction

This requires:

- Consistency of political decisions within the approved civic land development priorities.
- Support of the intent and priority elements of an approved ARP and reluctance to change them unless demonstrated gain for the community.
- Clear, articulated and consistently applied political will that validates effective consultation in land use development decisions.

Political will is a fundamental requirement; however, within the scope of this scenario it will not be addressed beyond stating the need for it.

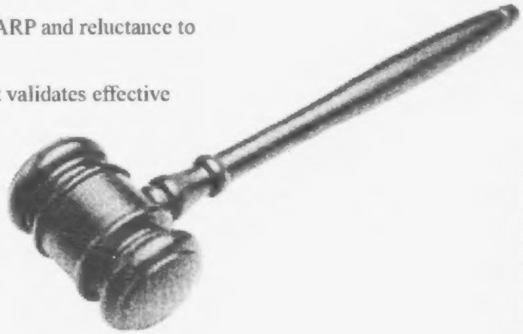


Photo The DAGNY Partnership

3.0 PROCESS “FIT” FOR EDMONTON (continued)

2) Enhancing credibility and effective working relationships

This requires:

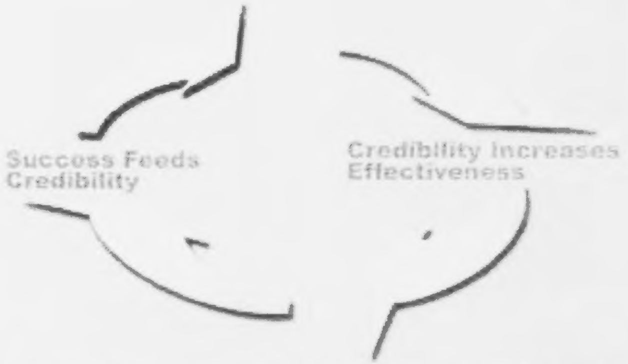
- A working relationship based on trust and respect between City planners, the community and the development industry.
  - City planners should not be perceived as an agent for any one community or business interest.
- Clearly understood roles and responsibilities for all the participants in the development process, especially the Planning and Development Department.
  - This is enhanced when planners have community profile on general planning issues.

Photo The DAGNY Partnership

The Planning and Development Department maintains a reasonable level of credibility, although it has been strained because of previous, controversial projects. To meet the current and anticipated development needs, the relationship between the City, the community and the development industry must be strengthened.

Credibility and an effective working relationship are significantly influenced by the cumulative result of effectively managing public engagement. It is important for the City to have a visible leadership role in selected activities, particularly the area redevelopment planning process and the community education component.

This will strengthen relationships within the community and provide opportunities for civic staff to build a stronger community network.


Success Feeds Credibility
Credibility Increases Effectiveness

Nurturing Consultation Credibility

Graphic The DAGNY Partnership

3) Creating communities that are educated in basic land-use planning

This requires:

- Improved understanding of the basics of land-use planning, who is involved, how it works and what the limitations are within the process.

The Planning and Development Department currently produces several "plain language" publications on the planning process and offers the information readily through its website and offices. These support tools are useful however, they need to be enhanced with a proactive education and communication program.

Smart Choice Planning Certificate

A "Smart Choice Planning Certificate" program will build additional volunteer resources that have basic planning knowledge to work in the community and champion this important civic priority.

This program will also increase Planning's profile in the community while enhancing the basic level of understanding of the planning process, the opportunities and the restraints.

A multi-course certificate program increases credibility in the eyes of the participants.

The Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues (EFCL) offers a series of workshops similar to Calgary's successful "Partners in Planning" program. However, participation to date has been low.

Photo City of Edmonton

This approach proposes that the City work with the EFCL and other key organizations in the development process, including resident and condo associations, to strengthen and expand this program.

In the end the proposed certificate program will create a network of community volunteers that have a better understanding of the process and can provide more informed input on behalf of their communities.

The City of Edmonton has used this model very successfully in other program areas such as the "Master Composter Program".

To complement this program an annual communication strategy is recommended to proactively educate Edmontonians on the civic priorities around redevelopment of Edmonton and its neighbourhoods.

While these foundation elements may not guarantee success, the absence of them will definitely inhibit it.

Photo The DAGNY Partnership

3.0 PROCESS "FIT" FOR EDMONTON (continued)

Phase 2 - Information Gathering through to Decision-making

With a solid foundation in place, the community is better equipped to deal with individual applications that arise. The "information gathering and sharing" and "engagement" phase of the process kicks in when an application or a planning proposal is under review.

The scale, scope and community impact of the project under consideration will define the nature of the consultation activities. ***The greater or wider the impact – the greater and wider the consultation.***

Evaluation and Communication

At key points in the Framework all stakeholders must ask –

- Do we have enough information to move on to the next phase?
- Are all the stakeholders at the table and have they been heard?
- Do we have solutions that can be supported?

If the answer is yes then participants should move on to the next phase.

If the answer is no, then participants should increase their information base or revisit outstanding issues before going forward.

The evaluation points are particularly important in redevelopment situations. This is the opportunity to make sure that you have:

- the right players at the table;
- a level of trust and understanding;
- the right information base; and
- a reasonable review of the issues, options and alternatives needed to move forward.

If participants don't feel this is the case it is important to loop back and attempt to resolve any outstanding issues.

Moving into the decision-making process with outstanding issues is very risky. Nobody comes out a winner.

City Council recognizes that people may not agree. However, Council has an expectation that all reasonable measures have been taken to find solutions acceptable to all the parties. In the absence of this, Council may weigh the issues and make a decision anyway.

Communicate progress

At each stage, participants are reminded to communicate the work to date or results of the activity to their broader communities.

Framework Example
Consultation Framework 3 – Application for redevelopment of 40 units or more

There are increased complexities around the neighbourhood dynamics in most prime redevelopment areas. This creates a need to enlarge the information gathering phase as well as expand the engagement phase.

This expanded process ensures:

- appropriate feedback loops to keep the community informed,
- understanding and trust between participants, and
- a knowledge base of interests and capacities consistent for all the stakeholders.

A hallmark of this process would be to move forward in tiny steps, ensuring that all parties are brought forward together.

While it may take a longer time to work through, it does not mean that the process should extend indefinitely. All participants should strive toward completing the process within a reasonable timeframe consistent with the current planning process of between 6 – 12 months.

Keeping people informed enhances their understanding and encourages future participation in building better communities.

Photo The DAGNY Partnership

Consultation Framework 3

Redevelopment of 40 units or more

Political Will and Direction

Current Approved Area Redevelopment Plans

Circulate application to 15-30 stakeholder organizations

Written notification to impacted property owners

Signage on the identified property

Individual stakeholders and special interest group stakeholder meetings

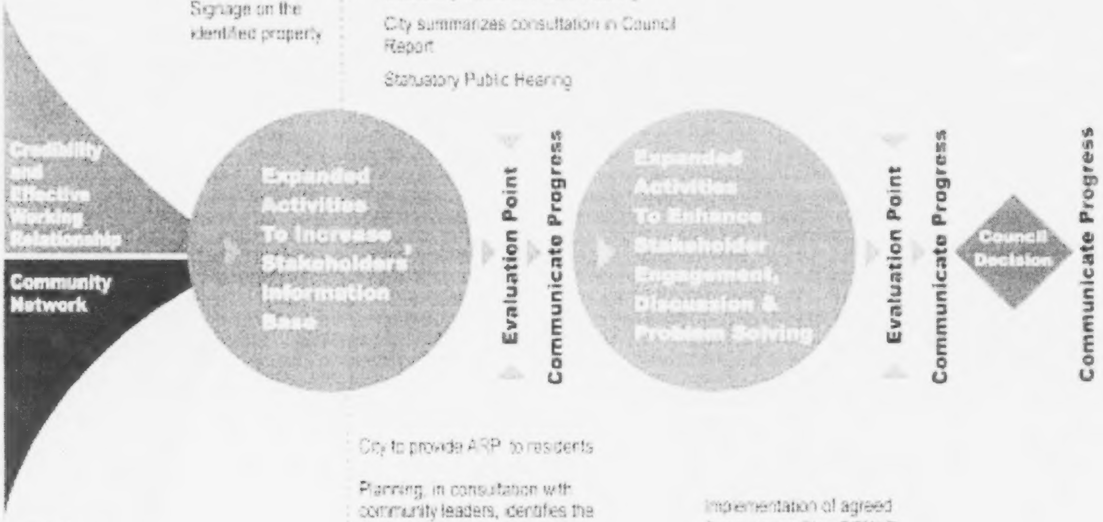
Public Meeting - optional
review the proposal,
planning process, land use implications and decision-making process
- Key civic reps and developer attend
- Handout material provided

Statutory notice of Public Hearing

City summarizes consultation in Council Report

Statutory Public Hearing

Current Process


Credibility and Effective Working Relationship
Community Network
Expanded Activities To Increase Stakeholders' Information Base
Evaluation Point
Communicate Progress
Expanded Activities To Enhance Stakeholder Engagement, Discussion & Problem Solving
Evaluation Point
Communicate Progress
Council Decision
Communicate Progress

Public Educated in Land Use Planning Issues

Smart Choice Planning Certificate

City to provide ARP to residents

Planning, in consultation with community leaders, identifies the preliminary issues and develops a consultation plan

Written notification on application to all the impacted stakeholders not only mandatory distribution

Planning to host community meeting to outline the consultation process, clarify roles and establish a Community Advisory Committee

Planning to host a "team building" workshop for the key stakeholders

Communication from web-site, newsletter, ad in community newsletter etc.

Use plain language and the web address on site signs

Implementation of agreed Consultation Plan **COULD** include:
- Community Conference
- Issue Workshops
- Design Charette
- Open Houses
- Interactive web-site for on-line input
- Site tours
- Focus Groups
- Mail back surveys

Public Meeting to share the Community Advisory Committee's recommendations

Expanded Consultation Summary submitted to Council prior to the Public Hearing

Proposed Changes

TIMELINE
ONGOING

6 - 12 MONTHS

Graphic The DAGNY Partnership

4.0 IMPLEMENTATION REQUIREMENTS & APPLICATION CONSIDERATIONS

The following chart highlights tools and tactics identified in the consultation framework. As stressed, there is no cookie cutter approach and the issues and implications should drive the final process design. However, there are recommended tactics that are appropriate to support the expanded information and engagement program proposed in Framework 3.

Proposed Tactics	Implementation	Application Considerations
Foundation Phase		
Neighbourhood ARP program	Planning staff to prepare ARP in targeted areas	More staff required Target communities with redevelopment potential
Smart Choice Planning Certificate program	Planning staff lead the program design and implementation Content provides the basics of land-use planning in Edmonton Partner with community organizations including the EFCL, resident and condo associations and any business associations active in planning	Held annually Target communities with redevelopment potential Based on currently successful model of citizen engagement (Partners in Planning – Calgary; Waste Master Composters – Edmonton)
A proactive communication program	Increase awareness of land development priorities of the City of Edmonton Program includes support material, more effective grassroots distribution and community outreach activities Implemented in partnership with "graduates" in the Smart Choice Planning Certificate program	Annual program Target residents and stakeholder organizations Could be city-wide or targeted to neighbourhoods where development activity is anticipated
Information Phase		
Provide a copy of the ARP to all landowners and residents	City to produce and distribute ARP Optional: display panels posted in community hall or central community location, showcasing the elements of the ARP	Distributed with the purchase of a home in the area Promote ARP in community newsletters
Community issue identification and target audience scan	Input gathered through stakeholder circulation and internal departmental feedback Develop a simple database of community contacts that staff can use to "keep in touch" Annual "community round table" discussion to keep staff "connected" to the current and emerging community and development issues Applicant to formally identify issues that have been raised through consultation as part of the application	Ongoing process of "keeping the community pulse" Formal issue identification process and community scan should be used for redevelopment applications
Development of formal consultation plan	Planning, in consultation with the community and the applicant, develops a formal consultation plan Utilize staff or consultants that are trained in community consultation May require additional or re-allocated financial resources	When the scale, scope and impact of the potential changes are significant If redevelopment is consistent with a current ARP, the consultation process may be abbreviated Happens at the very beginning of the process Identify any other information needed to support the process

Proposed Tactics	Implementation	Application Considerations
Information Phase (continued)		
- Stakeholder consultation summary	- Planning to direct mail or e-mail a summary of the process, proposed timelines and contact information - Ensure the "implications" of the recommendations are included and explained in plain language	- Occurs as a follow up from preliminary meetings
- Project web site	- Provides the information on the progress of the project and a feedback loop to Planning - Additional resources would be required to set up and manage the site	- Occurs as a follow up from preliminary meetings - Could be on either the City site or a separate site
- "Team Building" workshop	- Led by an independent facilitator and hosted by Planning - All key stakeholders attend (community reps, city staff and applicant) - Process should build relationships and define the agreed process, roles and responsibilities	- Occurs at the beginning of the process - Usually takes a day
Engagement Phase		
- Implement the agreed consultation plan	- Planning, in consultation with the community and the applicant, implement the agreed to consultation plan - Utilize staff or consultants that are trained in community consultation to support the Planning staff - A variety of consultation and communication techniques should be considered - Progress evaluation of the effectiveness of the consultation program should occur to ensure it stays on track	- The scale, scope and impact of the redevelopment application drive the complexity of the process; in most redevelopment cases of this size you would need a formal consultation process - Usually requires 6-12 months depending on the issues and time of year; too long a process is counterproductive
- Consultation communication plan	- Tactics could include information on the web site, a project "newsletter", a project presentation, updates in the community newsletter - Some additional financial resources may be required to support the activity	- Communication should align with key decision-points - "Project" communication tools to support individual partners communicating with their groups
- Expanded consultation summary	- Applicant and Planning to provide summary of their consultation activities to incorporate into a report for Council	- Both summaries provided to Council prior to the Public Hearing
Decision-making Phase		
- Decision communication plan	- Planning to thank participants and inform the impacted community of the decisions	- Information mailed following the Council decision

5.0 OUTCOMES

The Consultation Framework for redevelopment applications shifts the emphasis from reacting to an application, to proactively planning communities prime for redevelopment. This increases the certainty of the scale, scope and nature of the development that both the developer and the community can expect. The following highlights some of the outcomes for the key stakeholders.

Shareholders	Positive Outcomes	Negative Outcome
City of Edmonton – Planning	Empowers participation Builds committed residents with the skills to provide more effective input Creates a community network that the City can tap into May save time in appeals Reduces community confrontation – less stress Minimizes Council's role as an arbitrator Generates development solutions that serve a wider community	Will need staff dedicated to the ARP process May need additional funds May need different types of staff or consultants
Land Development Industry	Focuses input on specific projects, rather than becoming a lighting rod for "other" community planning issues Provides transparent, consistent direction on the process expected Provides flexibility Minimizes conflict at the decision-making stage Reduces appeals – both time and costs More time spent up front can reduce time and conflict at later, more expensive stages; early input is more cost effective to manage Constructive input within the defined parameters of the planning process is easier to deal with	Reduces industry influence Changes to the project may impact the return on investment Takes time, willingness to negotiate and different skills
Local Residents	Better understanding improves the quality of the input and the effect on the decision-making process Earlier participation in the process increases input's effectiveness Increases community skill and contact base Empowers communities to take ownership of development decisions	Takes time Takes a willingness to find alternatives
Community as a whole	Creates solutions embraced by more of the community Creates a stronger community partnership between residents, stakeholder organizations, the City and the development community Creates residents with a greater sense of community ownership	Takes a different resource allocation

This approach achieves these outcomes by increasing the emphasis on:

- community redevelopment planning prior to specific development applications;
- community and stakeholder education – from both the resident and the development perspective;
- building relationships between the parties first, then working through the issues;
- skilled consultation processes leading to community supported decisions;
- nurturing more informed input that respects the rights and responsibilities of the landowners, local residents and community at large; and
- building important "social capital and community engagement skills" with more businesses and residents resulting in a greater sense of community ownership and pride.

The most important outcome of this approach is that it re-emphasizes that proactive neighbourhood redevelopment planning should be in place to define the nature of redevelopment . . . rather than having a particular application define the neighbourhood by default. When the basic parameters are pre-defined, the consultation becomes focused on 'what will be developed' not 'whether it will be developed'.

Consultation will never eliminate disagreement.
It will however, provide a structure for a wider number of impacted participants to understand and work through the issues, constraints and opportunities in a timely manner.

APPENDIX I: CITY OF EDMONTON PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES

City Council and the administration recognize the ongoing need to accommodate Edmonton's growth and redevelopment while sustaining our quality of life. Several City departments are working on forward thinking initiatives, and the following pages present an overview of four smart choice areas the City is presently working on.

These stand-alone projects or initiatives are proceeding individually and are examples of ongoing City work for the reader's information.

SmartChoices
for developing our community

PROJECT

Fort Road Old Town

Cover Photo: City of Edmonton Planning and Development Department

1. Introduction

City of Edmonton Planning and Development Department

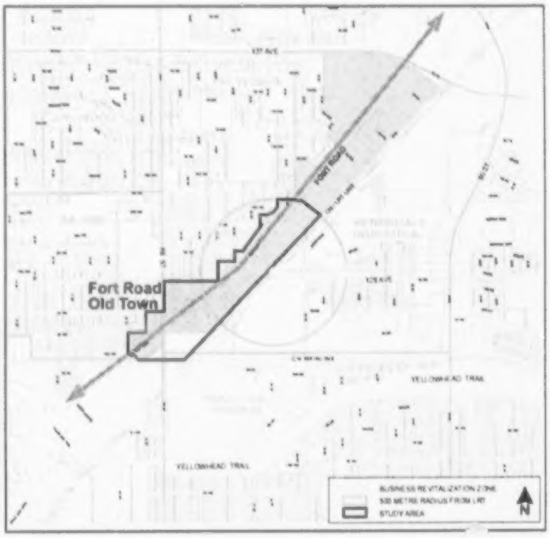
The area is characterized by deteriorated sidewalks and storefronts (view north along Fort Road).

The Fort Road Old Town project is a City-led initiative that presents a land use and implementation plan for the redevelopment of an area in northeast Edmonton. During the 1980s and 90s, the area experienced an economic downturn. It is now in a deteriorated state, and contains a substantial amount of private and City-owned vacant land. In addition, traffic congestion is building on Fort Road, the major north-east transportation corridor through the area.

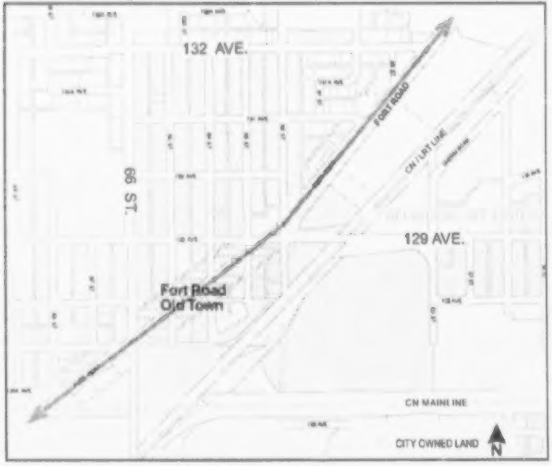
The Fort Road Old Town project sets the stage for the creation of a new Urban Village next to an LRT Station. A place where retail businesses will thrive, opportunities for affordable apartment and townhouse living are created, and residents and visitors have options to walk and ride transit to carry out their daily activities.

The project is presented here to show why it may be considered a "Smart Choice" for accommodating Edmonton's population growth.

Location Plan Showing Area and Belvedere LRT Station



Land Ownership Plan



Key Smart Choice features of the project are that it will:

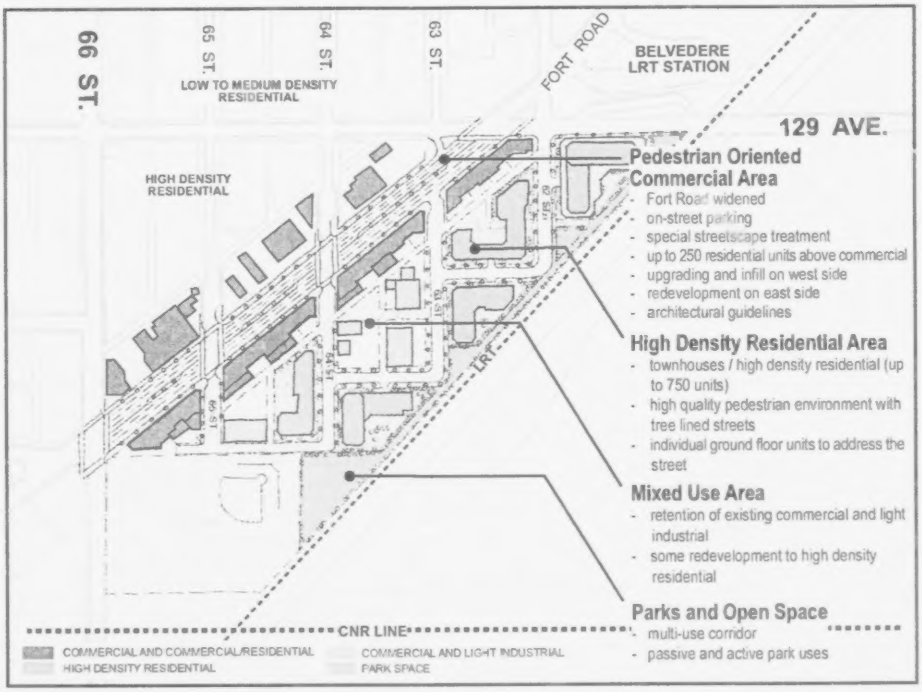
- Accommodate growth in an area of the city where development can take advantage of existing infrastructure including water and sewer lines, the Belvedere LRT Station, and adjacent schools and community parks;
- Create a neighbourhood where walking, cycling, and transit are desirable transportation options for new residents and visitors; and,
- Transform a suffering inner-city commercial and industrial area into a vital place, with viable businesses, and a residential population with affordable housing and convenient access options.

2. Discussion: Redevelopment Concept

The Fort Road Old Town plan proposes commercial development along Fort Road and a mix of multi-unit housing and commercial development in the area east of Fort Road, adjacent to the CN/ LRT tracks. The plan area will accommodate approximately 7500 square meters of commercial space, 250 residential units above the commercial space, and 750 multi-family units east of Fort Road.

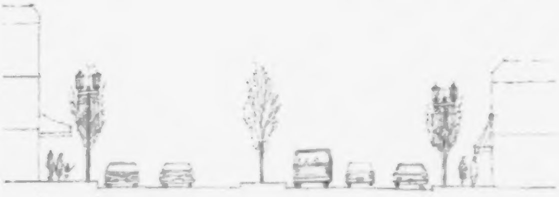
Fort Road will be widened to six lanes, and include a landscaped median. The road widening is designed to accomodate future traffic volumes and serve as a highway connector.

Concept Plan


66 ST.
65 ST.
64 ST.
63 ST.
FORT ROAD
BELVEDERE LRT STATION
129 AVE.
LOW TO MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
LRT
CNR LINE
Pedestrian Oriented Commercial Area
- Fort Road widened
- on-street parking
- special streetscape treatment
- up to 250 residential units above commercial
- upgrading and infill on west side
- redevelopment on east side
- architectural guidelines
High Density Residential Area
- townhouses / high density residential (up to 750 units)
- high quality pedestrian environment with tree lined streets
- individual ground floor units to address the street
Mixed Use Area
- retention of existing commercial and light industrial
- some redevelopment to high density residential
Parks and Open Space
- multi-use corridor
- passive and active park uses
▨ COMMERCIAL AND COMMERCIAL/RESIDENTIAL
HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
COMMERCIAL AND LIGHT INDUSTRIAL
PARK SPACE

Concept Model

City of Edmonton Planning and Development Department



Cross Section of Fort Road, developed as main street.

The outer two lanes of Fort Road will be used as travel lanes during peak traffic volume periods, and for parking in off-peak times. The road widening requires the removal and relocation of buildings on the east side of Fort Road.

Key aspects of the Fort Road Old Town design are the:

Revitalization of the Community's Main Street

For many years, Fort Road served as a pedestrian shopping street for surrounding neighbourhoods. This historic role is reinforced in the redevelopment plan through the design for the main street. Storefronts will be built to the sidewalk, and have front doors on Fort Road.

Mixed Land Uses and Multi-Unit Housing Adjacent to Transit

Apartments and townhouses will be within walking distance of the LRT Station and the Fort Road Main Street. This will provide housing options that allow residents to meet their daily needs without the use of a private vehicle. The density of residential uses also contributes to the viability of the commercial, retail, and office uses along the Main Street, and the LRT system.

Pedestrian Design

The success of the Main Street concept, the land use organization, and advantage of the proximity to LRT, all depend on an environment that is inviting to pedestrians. To create this environment, the redevelopment plan includes a design for Fort Road that has wide sidewalks, street furniture, street trees, plazas, and sidewalk cafes. Sidewalks and laneways are planned to link the Main Street, the residential areas, the LRT Station, and the multi-use trail along the CN and LRT tracks.

City of Edmonton Planning and Development Department

Public bikeway in a park setting

City of Edmonton Planning and Development Department

Housing above shops overlooking the street at a street corner.

GB Arrington, Parsons, Brinckerhoff Land Use Resource Centre, Portland, OR

Downtown housing adjacent to LRT.

City of Edmonton Planning and Development Department

Street-oriented high rise buildings with a combination of street oriented retail and terrace housing. Note the generous width of the sidewalk to encourage walking.

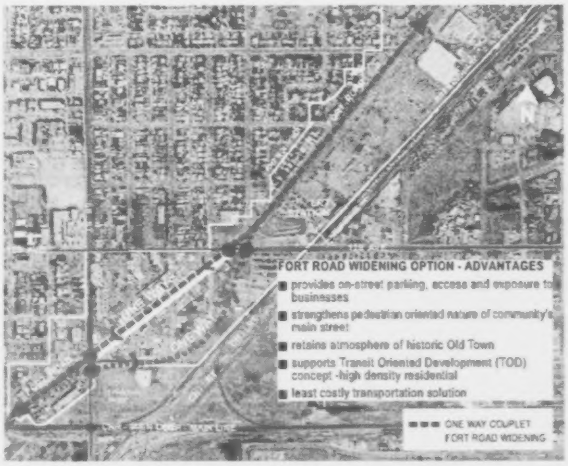
3. Neighbourhood and Edmonton "Fit"

Photo courtesy of: City of Edmonton Planning Department

Pedestrian oriented shopping street

The Fort Road Old Town project is a good fit with the surrounding neighbourhoods of Balwin and Belvedere. The plan aims to transform the area, which is in a deteriorated state, into a vital commercial and residential area, that will benefit both new residents in the Old Town neighbourhood, and the existing residents of Balwin and Belvedere.

A major element of the design that contributes to the fit of the plan with the existing neighbourhoods, is the design of the improvements to Fort Road. The plan to widen Fort Road to six lanes through the plan area is an alternative to a previous proposal that foresaw Fort Road converted to two one way streets. This required a bypass from a point south of 66 Street, to a point north 129 Avenue, consuming much of the area's developable land. The current design minimizes the land needed for road improvements, and allows for development of housing east of Fort Road. These uses are more compatible with the surrounding community than the one way couplet proposal.



FORT ROAD WIDENING OPTION - ADVANTAGES
provides on-street parking, access and exposure to businesses
strengthens pedestrian oriented nature of community's main street
retains atmosphere of historic Old Town
supports Transit Oriented Development (TOD) concept -high density residential
least costly transportation solution
ONE WAY COUPLET
FORT ROAD WIDENING

Fort Road widening and One-Way Couplet Option

The following elements of the project also encourage a "fit" with the adjacent neighbourhoods.

- The major public utilities and services in the area (sewer, water, schools, and parks) and the LRT, have capacity to accommodate the additional development.
- The design for the Main Street along Fort Road will create a pedestrian shopping area and reflect the area's historical connections. Emphasis will be on high quality building design. Street furniture will compliment the aesthetic and functional appeal of the area.
- The Fort Road widening and the design of the Main Street will incorporate traffic calming features and include a 50 kilometre speed restriction.

- The street grid and the boulevard street trees in the adjacent neighbourhoods will be replicated in the Fort Road Old Town area.
- The apartment housing proposed east of Fort Road is consistent in density with the housing that was built in the 1980s, just west of Fort Road at 129 Avenue.
- Twenty percent of housing is required to be "affordable" housing, providing options for area residents, and others with low incomes.
- The project plans for housing to be developed above the shops on the east side of Fort Road. This is a development concept that is seen elsewhere in Edmonton.

City of Edmonton Planning and Development Department

Children wait for the bus at Belvedere Transit Centre

- Pedestrian routes within the Old Fort Road area will connect adjacent neighbourhoods to the multi-use trail corridor and the LRT Station.

4. Implementation Requirements

City of Edmonton is going beyond a land use oriented redevelopment plan. The City will commit City-owned land, make investments in infrastructure, and provide incentives. These tools are focussed on generating private sector investment in the area, and ensuring the success of the project as a whole. The following section provides more detail on the factors that are key to the success of the project:

City-takes the initiative

The Fort Road Old Town Master Plan was approved by Council in November 2002. For the project to advance Council must now budget for the implementation of both the land development and the transportation components. Key land use planning tools, including the Belvedere Station Area Redevelopment Plan and the Zoning Bylaw must be amended. Council must also endorse Design Guidelines for the area.

The City must prepare designs for the expansion of Fort Road, the streetscape improvements, utility up-grades, park spaces, and pedestrian networks. The City will also do an environmental impact assessment.

A special project team will be designated to manage the redevelopment project through to completion. The lead departments will be Planning and Development, Transportation and Streets, and Asset Management and Public Works. Community Services and Corporate Services will also participate, and private sector expertise will be brought in as required.

City leverages its land holdings and infrastructure improvements

The City is a significant landowner in the Fort Road area, and will be consolidating developable sites and preparing land parcels to be sold and developed by the private sector. This process will be designed to ensure development meets the redevelopment criteria and urban design guidelines established for the area. This process will be coordinated with the administration and delivery of financial incentives, affordable housing requirements, and other conditions and inducements.

The City must also purchase land for the widening of Fort Road and the development of the commercial, residential and mixed land uses.

The City generates a positive return

The City needs to demonstrate the economic feasibility of the redevelopment concept. The Planning and Development Department has undertaken a preliminary cost-benefit analysis focussing on roadway construction, land acquisition, land sales, streetscape and park improvements, and commercial and residential land development components of the project. Potential costs associated with factors such as utility requirements, environmental mitigation, legal negotiations, marketing and development tendering have also been identified.

The net cost to the City of the land development component is estimated to be $503,000 over the five-year implementation period. It should be noted that the net cost does not include costs associated with a new LRT park and ride lot, the construction of a section of the city-wide multi-use trail through the area, or the Fort Road widening. These costs are estimated to be $12,025,000. They are separated from the Fort Road Old Town project because they are related to long term city-wide transportation needs.

In the five years following full build out it is estimated that the project will generate significant financial benefits to the City, in the order of $6,787,500. This figure includes $4,950,000 in property taxes, $337,500 in business taxes and $1,500,000 in additional LRT revenue.

Market Feasibility

A detailed market feasibility study must be prepared to determine the market potential for the different types of residential, commercial and mixed-use development. Work to date demonstrates that the market could absorb the 1,000 residential units and the 75,000 square feet of commercial space over the next five to seven years.

To aid the absorption, the City must work to develop a marketing program to attract high quality development projects, prospective residents, and business enterprises. Within that program, administrative guidelines will be prepared to provide grants of $3,500 per unit for the first 200 multi family housing units constructed. The Business Association will also participate in marketing the area.

Photo courtesy of City of Edmonton Planning Department

City of Edmonton Planning Department presents the Fort Road Redevelopment concept

REDEVELOPMENT COMPONENT–COST ESTIMATE	
Land Acquisition (in excess of Roadway requirements)	$775,000
Road Construction (interior streets) Streetscape Improvements (Fort Rd & interior streets) Servicing Park Development	$3,000,000
Design and Consulting Contracts	$500,000
Housing Grant Program	$700,000
TOTAL Project Cost	**$4,975,000**
REDEVELOPMENT COMPONENT–REVENUE ESTIMATE	
Sale of City's Excess Lands Fort Road Frontage – Commercial	$875,250
Sale of City's Excess Lands East of Fort Road – Residential	$3,596,250
TOTAL PROJECT REVENUES	**$4,471,500**
NET COST OF PROJECT TO CITY	**$503,500**

Photo courtesy of City of Edmonton Planning Department

Community participation in Fort Road Design Charette

Surrounding Community is Supportive

The Planning and Development Department has been working with the Fort Road Business and Community Association over the past two years to develop a new vision and redevelopment plan for the Fort Road Old Town Area. Surveys at the public meeting held indicate 90% support for the project. The surrounding community will continue to be involved in the project as it moves forward.

5. Application

This type of development may be replicated where:

- There is a large parcel of developable land adjacent to a major transit facility
- The Edmonton housing market is strong
- The project can produce positive financial returns (City-owned land is an advantage)
- City Council supports City's leadership role

The Clareview area and the area around the Colliseum and Stadium LRT stations may support a similar type of development. Locations may also exist in the Kennedale Industrial area to the east of Fort Road. The City owns land in this area and there is the potential to connect the area to the Belvedere LRT Station.

Previously successful applications of this type of redevelopment concept were the Rossdale and Cloverdale projects, where the City was a major landowner, and initiated infrastructure improvements to leverage private sector investment.

6. Outcomes

The Fort Road Old Town project will result in both positive and negative outcomes for those affected by the project.

Affected Parties	Positive Outcomes	Negative Outcomes
Fort Road Business Association & Commercial Property Owners	• Road and streetscape improvements will make the area more inviting to customers and clients. • Additional residential development will increase the potential market for the goods and services offered. • Area redevelopment will increase property values.	• Some businesses along Fort Road will be displaced by land acquisition by the City. The City is proposing to mitigate the negative impacts, however, it is uncertain at this time what this will entail. • Property taxes will increase with the increase in land values. • Lease rate will increase. Businesses not able to generate profits at the higher lease rates may be forced out of the area.
Community League & Community Residents	• The land use and implementation plan for the area and the design guidelines will afford existing residents more certainty in how the area will evolve. • Presence of new residents in the area will contribute to new commercial and community services not justified by the size of the current population.	• Although the development is designed to ensure that transit will be convenient for new residents, and that residents have access to services within the community, the addition of 1,000 more units will result in a marginal increase in traffic.
Development Community	• The majority of the front-end work, including public consultation and marketing, will have been done by the City to reduce the risk and uncertainty that developers would ordinarily face. • Financial incentives will be offered to developers willing to take the risk of developing the first 200 units. • City will be making investments in road and streetscape improvements, servicing, park and multi-use development.	• The Fort Road Old Town area is currently in a deteriorated state, and is an untested market. It requires those developing early in the implementation period to take on some risk. • The City has expectations regarding the density, form, and design of development in the area. These expectations will be somewhat more limiting than developers would ordinarily face.
City	• Benefits will be generated from land sales, long term property tax base increases, business tax base increases, increased LRT ridership and from the efficient use of existing infrastructure. • Land required for arterial road will be minimized. • The project can be used as a project model for future development of this kind.	• Investments in land acquisition, road widening and construction, streetscape improvements, servicing, park and multi-use trail development, and improvements to the Belvedere LRT Station may not generate the financial returns expected.

SmartChoices
for developing our community

INITIATIVE

Creating a Sustainable and Healthy Downtown

Cover Page Photo: City of Edmonton Planning and Development Department

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In 1997 the City of Edmonton approved its revitalization plan for downtown, the Capital City Downtown Plan (CCDP). In Edmonton, over the last five years, the Plan has been instrumental in:

City of Edmonton Planning and Development Department

- **generating investment in downtown;**
- **building a downtown residential population;**
- **creating a positive perception of downtown;**
- **rebuilding the tax base; and**
- **creating a stronger profile for downtown as an identifying feature of the Edmonton region and Edmonton's position as the Provincial Capital.**

Edmonton's Capital City Downtown Plan is now entering the last stage of Plan implementation with a scheduled completion date of 2005. Edmonton is in the enviable position of being able to build a positive future on the basis of what has been achieved in downtown over the last several years. As downtown Edmonton has begun to see increased activity and investment, key local trends have emerged. Also, as other cities across North America move further through the implementation of similar downtown revitalization plans, a body of knowledge and experience is being built that can be useful in generating ideas and comparisons for our own downtown. Our local knowledge combined with general information on downtown revitalization, helps to provide the direction for a "made in Edmonton" scenario.

Key Smart Choices features of a healthy downtown:

Options
The choice to build a healthy and vital downtown generates a wide range of benefits for the city and strengthens Edmonton's position and image throughout the region and province. The downtown offers a concentration of amenities available nowhere else in the city. Downtown provides a community lifestyle option that meets the expected demands of a growing "amenity conscious" aging baby boomer population and provides an attractive lifestyle to younger "urban pioneers" seeking an alternative to suburban lifestyles.

Vitality

Downtown should be vital and lively places where people, their ideas, and actions intersect. The buzz of activity should reflect the prosperity and vitality of place that draws people, investment and is an expression of the culture of the people of the city and surrounding region. Downtown should reflect diversity in its population and in the business and cultural activity that it sustains. Diversity creates energy, innovation and therefore, greater viability.

Viability

Downtown should be an engine of economic growth for the entire region. It is a place where investment decisions are made that affect the entire city, the region and the province. Each square foot of land in downtown should deliver proportionately higher taxes to the city because highest and best use is made of land.

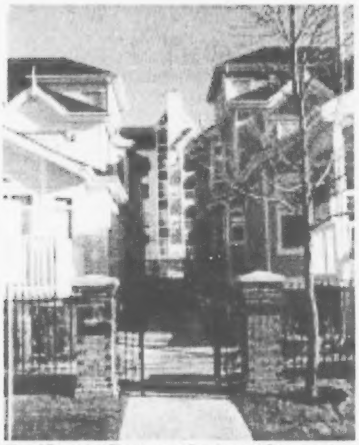
Access

Downtown should be accessible, the hub of the city and a gateway to other destinations in the region and province. Pedestrians should be easily able to navigate to and from and between destinations within downtown. The streets should be comfortable, safe and interesting. A range of transportation alternatives would, as a result, be sustained by the downtown's central position.

2.0 DISCUSSION

A healthy downtown generates quantitative as well as qualitative benefits for the entire city. This principle is a key feature of the City's strategy for revitalizing downtown Edmonton. Quantitative measures of vitality include the market value assigned to the desirability of downtown real estate. Qualitative measures include the intangibles that help define the sense of place in downtown including, the feeling that you get from walking the streets, the warmth and spirit of the people, the civic pride shown in the city's cleanliness and the quality of development. A healthy downtown generates a stronger assessment base and higher taxes, makes concentrated, economical use of infrastructure and therefore benefits the entire city.

Strategic forces are instrumental in shaping communities and broader society. Typically these forces include, political, economic, demographic environmental, social, technical and legal forces.



City of Edmonton Planning and Development Department

New residential projects are helping to revitalize the Downtown area.

One of the major forces emerging in many cities across the United States is the suburbanization of downtowns by an influx of wealthy baby boomers who are drawn to the amenity rich downtown lifestyle. The term "suburbanization" used here refers to the effect on the physical landscape, mix of land uses and the economic, social and demographic profile of downtown. Suburbanization is characterized by:

- new (formerly suburban) resident opposition to a range of development scenarios including higher intensity developments and wider ranges of mixed uses;
- high housing costs and resulting polarization of classes (only the wealthy can afford to live and benefit from the many advantages of central city living); and
- the disappearance of ethnic, class and cultural diversity within the residential and small business communities.

Edmonton is far off from this degree of polarization. However, the insurance against such effects can be found in supporting diverse and innovative economies, promoting a culture of diversity, social consciousness and proactively responding to issues as they emerge through a strong partnership approach to projects.

Several key forces play critical roles in shaping our downtown and our approach to downtown planning.

Economic and Social Sustainability

The development of a healthy downtown economy is a key part of downtown revitalization. A healthy economy will generate its own momentum, help add diversity and reduce the effect on the downtown landscape of any shocks in the broader economy.

Most cities in North America share a common belief that the development of a downtown residential population is an essential ingredient in bringing vitality to downtown. A local residential population provides a stable consumer base for the development of a self-sustaining local economy.

The City of Edmonton directly addressed residential growth as one of its first priorities in revitalizing downtown. Combined with the effect of the robust economy and other converging trends, the City of Edmonton's Housing Reinvestment Program triggered construction of nearly 2000 residential units in downtown in four years (1998-2002).

As a result of residential growth there is growing recognition of the viability of the downtown consumer market. Retailers are beginning to recognize that downtown Edmonton has a built-in retail consumer base to complement the estimated 50,000 workers from around the city who commute to downtown every day.

However, in 2002 when the City reviewed the recovery of various land types since 1997 (a low point in the value of the downtown tax base) it was apparent that the retail and service sectors had not recovered to the same degree as other land use sectors such as residential and commercial office space sectors. This information, along with the depressed appearance and economic state of street level retail and the apparent significant opportunity emerging from the increasing residential population led to a focus on retail and commercial activity.

Several steps have been taken.

- Two policies were passed to improve the look of downtown by supporting private sector investment in improvements to the outside of street level retail buildings and major mall complexes.
- Downtown organizations and the City are studying ways to restructure the approach to economic development in downtown. The focus is on practical, results driven, economic development field work, helping bring new businesses to downtown and supporting those that are already here.

Social and demographic forces

In order to be relevant in the future, downtown planning must be both proactive and flexible to respond to and anticipate significant shifts in social and demographic trends. Key trends are emerging from three groups:

Baby Boomers
The baby boom generation is expected to retire in a different manner than previous generations. This includes seeking active lifestyle options in the amenity rich environment of downtown where they can shop, have ready access to community services and enjoy the vitality of a dynamic and interesting lifestyle option.

Echo Boom
The echo boom is placing strong demands on the post secondary system and will ultimately represent a significant force in first home ownership over the next ten years. A strong youth market is good for downtown because young people bring social consciousness, creativity and liveliness to their community.

New Immigrants

New immigrants who arrive to fill the vacuum left by the retiring baby boomers will also seek skills development and opportunity in our downtown. A diverse downtown will attract this population.

The three groups have intersecting interests. These intersecting interests coincide with the goal to sustain a more diverse economy, residential population and cultivate an arena of ideas that makes downtown unique interesting and lively. Baby boomers are living longer, more active lives and will seek an amenity rich environment. The immigrant and youth populations present new start-up business opportunities. Immigrant and youth populations bring different ideas into our communities and are a source of creativity and innovation. All three groups present diversity to the market place thereby creating a more dynamic and resilient economy.

Legal and environmental forces

Healthy and sustainable downtowns provide a proactive means for adapting to future environmental impacts and the potential regulations that may be implemented to contain these effects. The regulations associated with the implementation of the Kyoto Accord may impact the growth and development of cities.

Those cities that have invested in downtowns may benefit from their forward thinking approach. For example, higher fuel costs may encourage people to move closer to work. Efficient use of infrastructure may become a greater asset if the federal government shows greater interest in urban areas.

The infrastructure, such as roads, sewers, storm sewers and other utilities, that is already in place in downtown is, for the most part, paid for and able to accommodate higher intensities of development. As a result, raw land is not consumed and servicing higher intensity development does not generally require new infrastructure.

City residents should also be aware of how the urban landscape and way of life changes as a result of current patterns and behaviours. Regional sprawl and general growth and development within the city is likely to increase traffic congestion. This could encourage people who work near or in downtown to live there as well. Downtown's central location encourages energy efficiency by promoting alternative forms of transportation. Established access routes for public transit and pathways are in place.

3.0 FIT AND DESIGN ELEMENTS

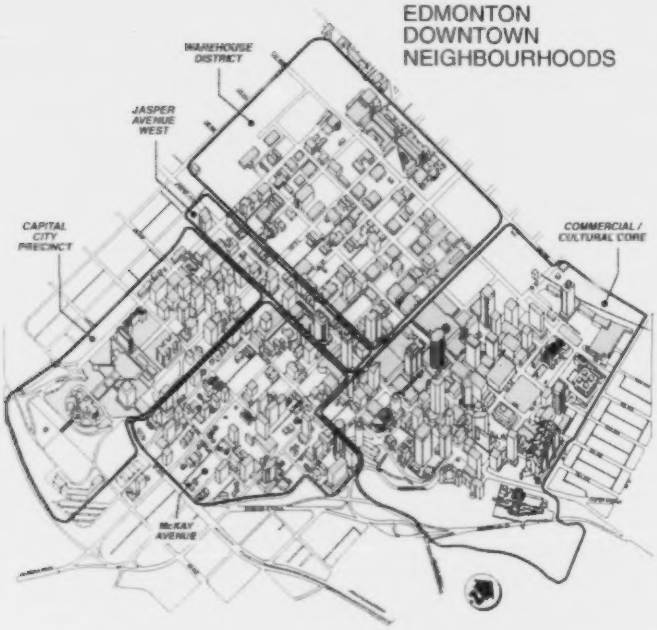
Fit

Downtown Edmonton is ideally located within the city's infrastructure profile. Private and public sector investment in downtown not only contributes to Edmonton's image, tax base and the quality of life and prosperity of the downtown community, it is also an efficient investment that generates proportionally higher net revenues than other areas of the city. The infrastructure in downtown is already built. The culture of downtowns supports the pursuit of the highest and best use of land. Downtown is the hub of the city and employs an established transportation network to draw equally on the population base of the surrounding land area of the city and region. For example, employers with high numbers of employees are attracted to downtown because of its central location and the ability to draw universally on the surrounding population base.

Design

The design elements of downtown include everything from the look of the buildings, the paving material and width of sidewalks, to the design and location of public parks and public/private open space. Successfully integrated design in downtown creates a sense of welcome and comfort and exudes a confidence that is symbolic of Edmonton and the region.

4.0 IMPLEMENTATION REQUIREMENTS



In order to continue to support the process of building a vital downtown several key factors need to be addressed:

- **Long term perspective:** Ensure that a long term perspective exists and continue to maintain a competitive downtown. There will be continued need for administrative and political support for downtown after 2005 when the scheduled completion date of the Capital City Downtown Plan has passed.
- **Project focus:** The environment in downtown is more dynamic with more interested parties engaged in active projects. The City can effectively participate in this project based environment by taking a similar approach, both responding to project demands as they emerge and initiating new activity within a similar project framework.
- **Partnerships:** Partnerships are essential in a project environment. A partnership model brings together key interested parties for intensive participation on the completion of a results oriented collaborative exercise. When the project is completed, the City's obligations cease or reduce to a low level implementation function
- **Balanced view of downtown investment:** Capturing market share beyond the immediate downtown population, engaging the local population in the downtown community and sustaining long term interest and prosperity in downtown also involves making it competitive. This requires a holistic view of downtown and requires that we look at issues that may have less of a direct connection to quantitative measures of success.

Application

In the future the issue of greater downtown area planning is likely to emerge. Effective planning for the functional linkages between the downtown core and the downtown fringe – an area comprising some 6 neighbourhoods – will require more effective administrative mechanisms within the community league system and the approach taken to service delivery by the City itself.

6.0 OUTCOMES

Affected Parties	Positive Outcomes	Negative Outcomes
City	More tax revenue Stronger image for the City of Edmonton: internationally, nationally, provincially, regionally Build economic diversity by creating stronger downtown economy Long term regulatory advantage	Polarization of incomes drives middle and lower income residents out of downtown Social issues are displaced to adjacent or other communities Detailed focus on statutory downtown boundaries results in lost opportunities derived from planning a broader area
Downtown Organizations	A project-based approach helps focus activities around results based outcomes. Likely emergence of a stronger community association as condominium owners settle in their downtown lifestyles. A stronger community association will be a vehicle for people to express their view of community identity and appropriate development scenarios.	Organizations incapable of a results oriented approach will lose relevance.
Downtown Land/Condo Owners	Improved property values Likely change in demographic profile to an older population as amenities in downtown increase and perceived risk associated with investment disappears. Increasing percentage of owner occupied and investment condominiums creates a more stable and interested downtown population.	Possible opposition to mixed use development due to values clash among ex – suburbanites moving into downtown.
Edmonton Citizens	A place to visit, work, shop and live. More civic pride in downtown and the City in general. Business community has a downtown that displays the confidence of the Edmonton economy. An amenity rich housing/lifestyle choice.	
Downtown Housing Renters	Corporate investment in building improvements to attract high end tenants.	Escalating rents displace lower income tenants.
Developers	More intensive use of costlier land.	
Downtown Education Institutions	Stronger profile and functional connection to the U of A. Recognized location of key programs in downtown. Stronger connection between the business community and the various schools.	

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INITIATIVE

Future School Sites Study

Cover Photo: City of Edmonton Planning and Development Department

1.0 Introduction

Increasing concern in newly developing areas of Edmonton over the lack of timely delivery of schools to residents, and the increased number of longstanding vacant school sites, led to the City Council direction that the Planning and Development Department undertake a study of these issues. The study focus was on the provision of school sites in future communities.

To undertake this study, Edmonton Planning and Development assembled a team of professionals with direct involvement in school site planning.

Workshop sessions involving key stakeholders resulted in an agreed upon vision that saw schools as integral components of well-planned future communities.

The Vision says:

"School sites in communities of the future will be centrally located, multi-use "community knowledge campuses" that serve students and learners of all ages and house a range of complementary recreational, community and public services. They will be "beacons" at the heart of the community that are relevant, adaptive, flexible and accessible."

The concept of a Community Knowledge Campus (CKC) is consistent with the "Smart Choice" fundamentals. A central location combined with a variety of linkages will enhance the site as a "focal point" or "hub" within the community that it serves. CKC partners will be able to promote a broad range of educational and other services, thereby addressing the fundamentals of options, vitality, viability and access at the neighbourhood, community or district levels of service delivery.

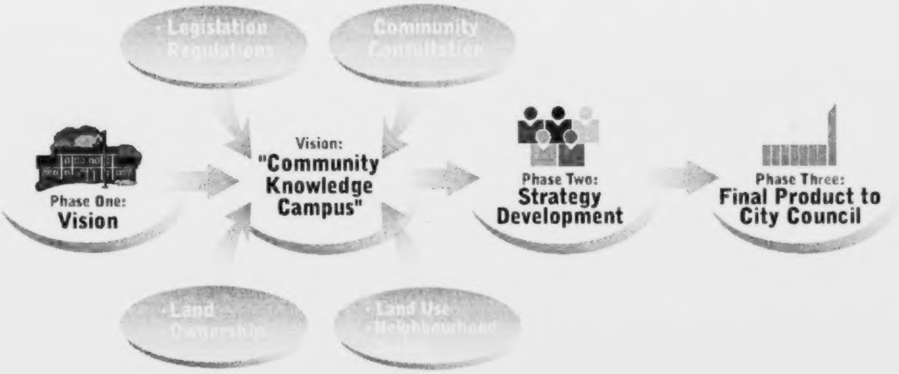
2.0 Discussion

The Future School Sites Strategy Working Committee is comprised of representatives from :

- Alberta Municipal Affairs
- Alberta Infrastructure
- Edmonton Public Schools
- Edmonton Catholic Schools
- Urban Development Institute
- Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues
- Edmonton Community Services
- Edmonton Transportation and Streets
- Edmonton Asset Management and Public Works
- Edmonton Planning and Development

This Committee **initiated the following phased process** for the development of a future school sites strategy:

Strategy Development through a "Phased" process


• Legislation
• Regulations
Community
Consultation
Phase One:
Vision
Vision:
"Community
Knowledge
Campus"
Phase Two:
Strategy
Development
Phase Three:
Final Product to
City Council
• Land
Ownership
• Land Use
• Neighbourhood

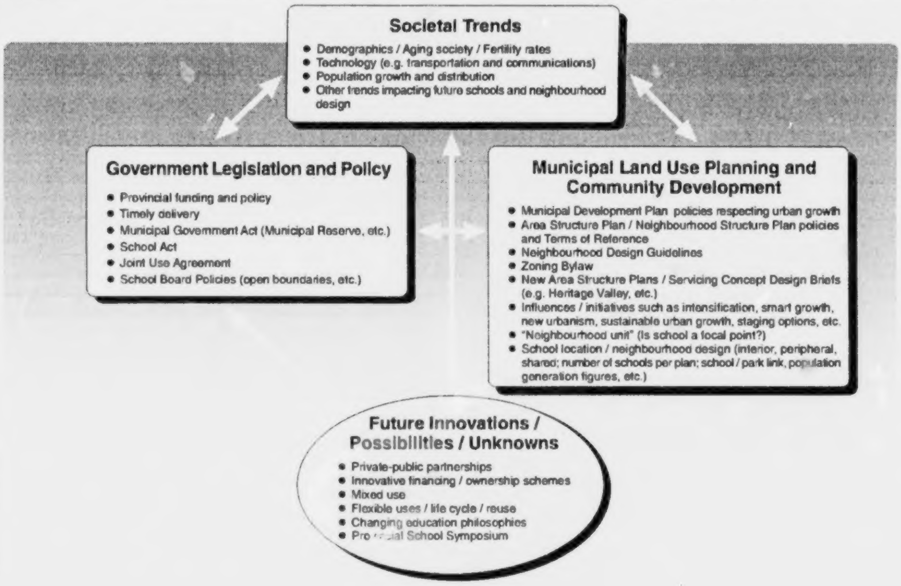
Phase One – Develop a Vision:

Two visioning workshop sessions resulted in the Visioning Workshop Session Report. This report summarizes workshop results and the preferred vision of thirty key stakeholders

Phase Two – Develop a Strategy Model:

Working Committee efforts shifted to the development of a strategy to implement the preferred vision. This included research into a wide range of factors influencing school site decision-making (see next page).

Factors influencing *school site decision-making*



Societal Trends

- Demographics / Aging society / Fertility rates
- Technology (e.g. transportation and communications)
- Population growth and distribution
- Other trends impacting future schools and neighbourhood design

Government Legislation and Policy

- Provincial funding and policy
- Timely delivery
- Municipal Government Act (Municipal Reserve, etc.)
- School Act
- Joint Use Agreement
- School Board Policies (open boundaries, etc.)

Municipal Land Use Planning and Community Development

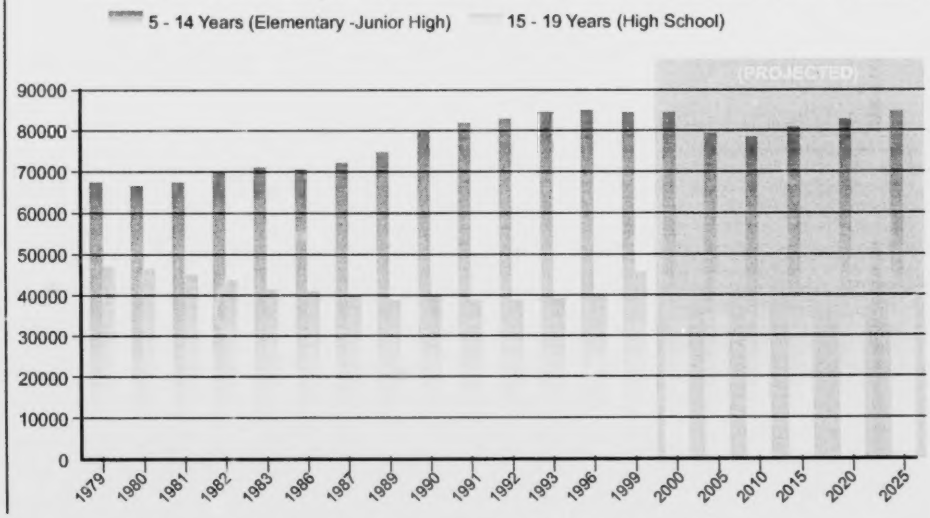
- Municipal Development Plan policies respecting urban growth
- Area Structure Plan / Neighbourhood Structure Plan policies and Terms of Reference
- Neighbourhood Design Guidelines
- Zoning Bylaw
- New Area Structure Plans / Servicing Concept Design Briefs (e.g. Heritage Valley, etc.)
- Influences / initiatives such as intensification, smart growth, new urbanism, sustainable urban growth, staging options, etc.
- "Neighbourhood unit" (Is school a focal point?)
- School location / neighbourhood design (interior, peripheral, shared; number of schools per plan; school / park link, population generation figures, etc.)

Future Innovations / Possibilities / Unknowns

- Private-public partnerships
- Innovative financing / ownership schemes
- Mixed use
- Flexible uses / life cycle / reuse
- Changing education philosophies
- Provincial School Symposium

According to a Planning and Development Department forecast, the overall school-age population in Edmonton is expected to either diminish or stabilize, notwithstanding an overall population increase. The following graph illustrates demographic influence.

Edmonton School Age Population Trends and Projections (1979 - 2025)

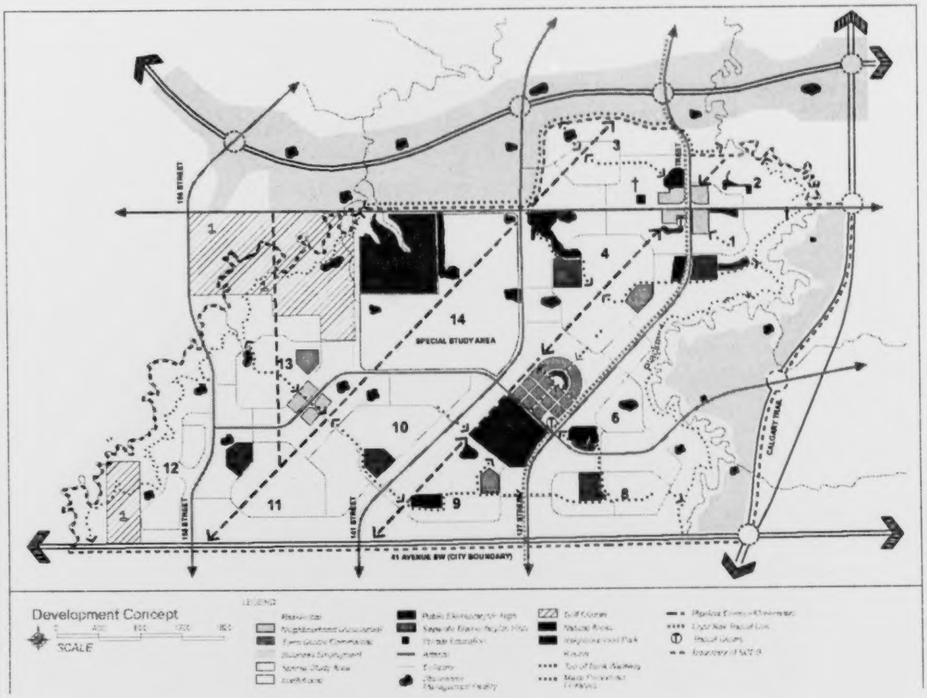


Study Findings:

A general consensus was reached among the Future School Sites Strategy Working Committee that:

- **The concept of 'Joint Use' is good.** *The development of school sites in conjunction with abutting park sites reinforces strong bonds between schools and communities.*
- **The "Community Knowledge Campus" (CKC) Concept is desirable as a means of enhancing a community focal point.** *There is merit in providing a limited range of partnership opportunities within school sites on Municipal Reserve lands. Consideration also should be given to a wider range of compatible community service partners on nearby non Municipal Reserve lands, whether under private or public ownership. Partnerships on school sites allows access to a wider range of community services, enhances lifelong learning opportunities and can take advantage of efficiencies associated with economies of scale and better use of existing physical infrastructure.*
- **There will continue to be a shift to community level school sites serving clusters of neighbourhoods.** *In recent years, there has been a move away from the "one elementary school per neighbourhood" model (e.g., Heritage Valley Service Concept Design Brief). It is expected that this trend will continue, translating into school sites being located in the centre of communities efficiently serving clusters of neighbourhoods.*

Heritage Valley Development Concept



Achievement of the Vision:

The Vision will be achieved through implementation of the CKC Strategy Model. The model will serve as a flexible guide for planning the placement of school sites in future communities. It provides for inclusion of joint use park sites and creates the opportunity for additional potential school site partnerships that are proportionate in scale/intensity to the area that is being served. The Model can work with or without partnership and can be easily revised to respond to changing needs.

CONCEPTUAL STRATEGY MODEL FOR THREE LEVELS OF SCHOOL/COMMUNITY KNOWLEDGE CAMPUS SITES

neighbourhood level

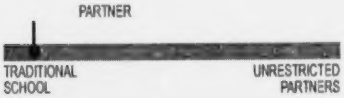
a. definition

Service delivery range is up to approximately 5,000 persons within a single, contained neighbourhood unit, within a Neighbourhood Structure Plan.

b. school/CKC overview

The School/CKC will generally not occur, except for unique situations (e.g. isolated or large neighbourhood). Generally, there will be one park per neighbourhood.

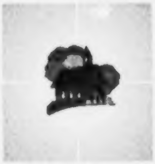
c. potential partnership continuum



community level

a. definition

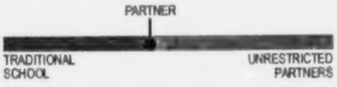
Service delivery range is two or more neighbourhoods of 5-20,000 persons within a Neighbourhood Structure Plan or Neighbourhood Area Structure Plan.



b. school/CKC overview

The School/CKC will locate near the centre of the community to serve clusters of adjacent neighbourhoods. It will include opportunities for a limited range of partnership uses as per MGA limits. It includes a joint use park site and can include a wider range of CKC partners on adjacent non-reserve land.

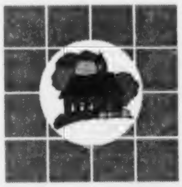
c. potential partnership continuum



district level

a. definition

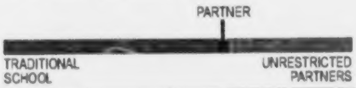
Service delivery range is two or more communities with a population range of 20,000+ persons within an Area Structure Plan or a Servicing Concept Design Brief.



b. school/CKC overview

The School (all levels)/CKC will locate in the centre of the district or sector in a distinct campus style. It will include opportunities for a range of CKC partnerships and will always include district level parks. It can include a wider range of CKC partners, with limitations on reserve land.

c. potential partnership continuum



NOTE:

Community Knowledge Campus (CKC) partners on Municipal Reserve land are limited to "school/park/recreation" restrictions of the Municipal Government Act. Other Community Knowledge Campus (CKC) partnerships are encouraged, but must locate on non-reserve land (or require Reserve designation removal).

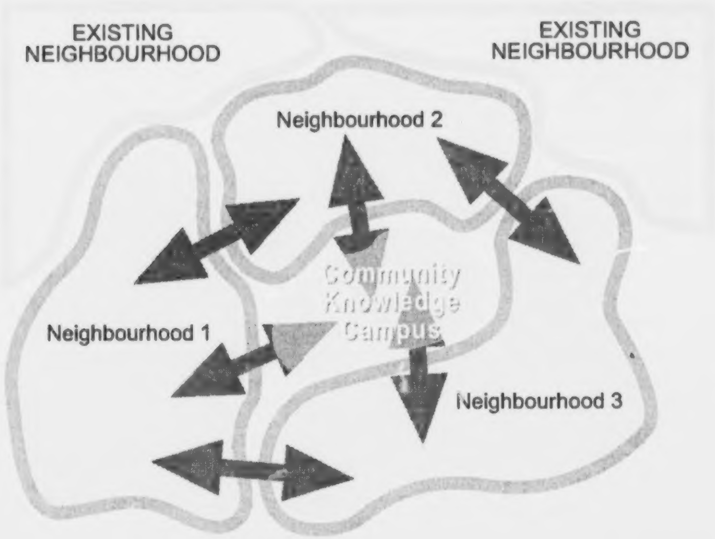
3.0 Neighbourhood Fit

What is the role of the CKC structure? Research conducted during the preparation of this study revealed that schools are widely considered to be significantly important to the stability of a community. Schools have been described as being "centres of communities", "community-centred", "community-based" or "community-learning centres". The CKC Vision states that they will be "beacons at the heart of the community." A CKC may be defined as:

> ***"a structure, or group of structures, on a site located near the centre of a community. Its primary use is the provision of educational opportunities, along with a range of compatible partner uses, which collectively provide a focal point for the community. The scope and scale of the CKC will be proportionate to the delivery area that it serves".***

Although a CKC structure(s) will predominantly serve an "educational" function, its central role within its respective service delivery area can only be sustained if proper land use planning and principles are applied. Some of these principles are identified in the following discussion.

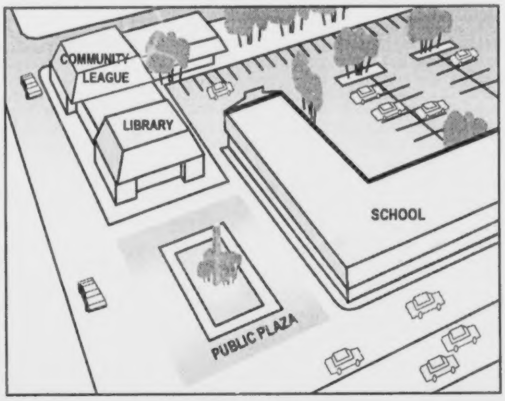
- The CKC facility ***should be centrally-located*** to enhance accessibility while sustaining a integral relationship between the structure and its respective service delivery area. Furthermore, it is important to keep in mind that as the city expands outward, this new focal point may also to some degree serve an adjacent, previously developed community.
- CKC structures ***must establish linkages*** into these areas through a variety of means including roadway connections, pedestrian walkways, bike paths and even telecommunications. This philosophy is illustrated by the following figure:



Community Knowledge Campus must have linkages to surrounding neighbourhoods

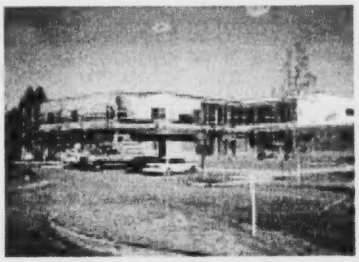
- Linkages to parks and other open spaces are important to the success of the CKC concept. However, excessive use of open space from large sportsfields and parking lots can isolate the "focal point" from its users, by creating both a physical and visual barrier to adjacent sidewalk and street systems and the adjacent community.

Attempts should be made to ensure that such ***barriers are minimized or relocated elsewhere*** and that other ***forms of public space (e.g., public square or plaza) are incorporated to serve as connectors to the community***. Such an approach is illustrated in the figure shown to the right.



A connected community focal point

The CKC complex ***should strive for an efficient use of land and building space***. This can be accomplished by avoiding designs that duplicate uses of space both within and immediately around the structure. The photo, shown to the right, demonstrates how a two-floor design can reduce the amount of land needed for a CKC site:



City of Edmonton Planning and Development Department

- The CKC must be ***designed to define a civic presence*** or something that will tell citizens that this is something special to the community. While phrases such as a "community hub" or "beacon at the heart of the community" imply something that is "central" and physically "connected" there must also be a visual linkage that is symbolic of the CKC's overall importance to the community. According to an article entitled, "Top Ten Design Ideas for Schools in the 21st Century"...

> *"People have built splendid palaces, cathedrals and more recently courthouses in the centre of communities as a symbol of what is important to them. As societies have become complex, multiple focuses have developed. More recently, lifelong learning and education have become increasingly important as a focus."*

The following photo illustrates how a structure can be designed to present an "identifiable community presence".

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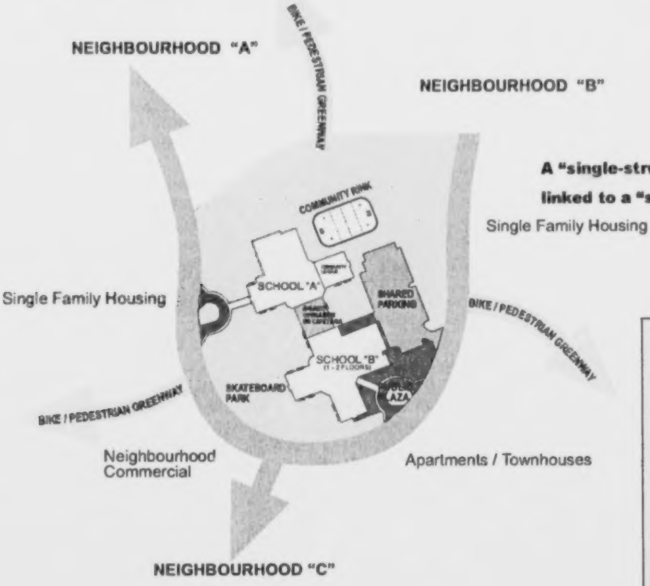
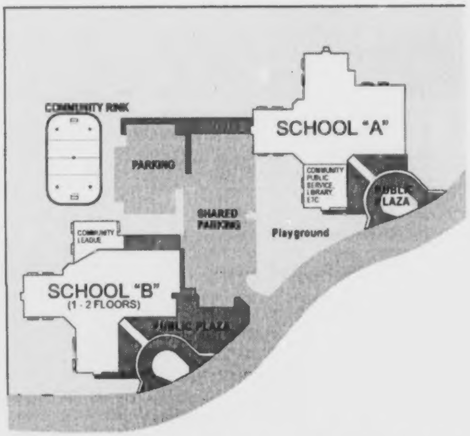
CKCs can be sited within a delivery area in various ways such as linked activities housed ***within a single multi-use structure or within a campus-like cluster of independent or multi-use structures***. The following two illustrations provide conceptual scenarios as to what might occur on a CKC designated site:


NEIGHBOURHOOD "A"
BIKE / PEDESTRIAN GREENWAY
NEIGHBOURHOOD "B"
COMMUNITY RINK
Single Family Housing
SCHOOL "A"
SHARED PARKING
Single Family Housing
BIKE / PEDESTRIAN GREENWAY
SCHOOL "B"
(1 - 2 FLOORS)
SKATEBOARD PARK
BIKE / PEDESTRIAN GREENWAY
Neighbourhood Commercial
Apartments / Townhouses
NEIGHBOURHOOD "C"

A "single-structure" Community Knowledge Campus site plan linked to a "service delivery area".


COMMUNITY RINK
SCHOOL "A"
PARKING
COMMUNITY PUBLIC SERVICE, LIBRARY ETC
PUBLIC PLAZA
SHARED PARKING
Playground
COMMUNITY LEAGUE
SCHOOL "B"
(1 - 2 FLOORS)
PUBLIC PLAZA

A "campus-style" Community Knowledge Campus site plan.

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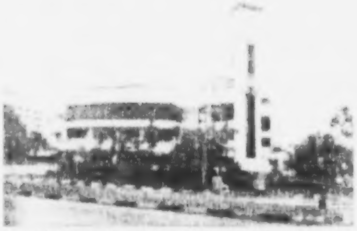

City of Edmonton Planning and Development Department

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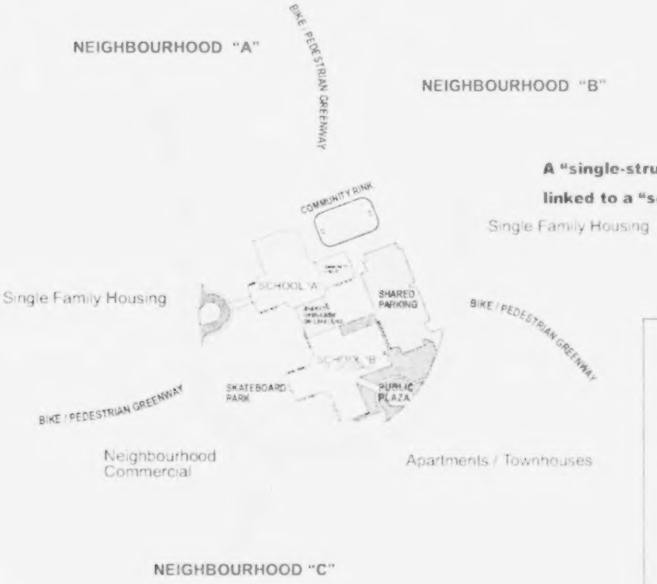
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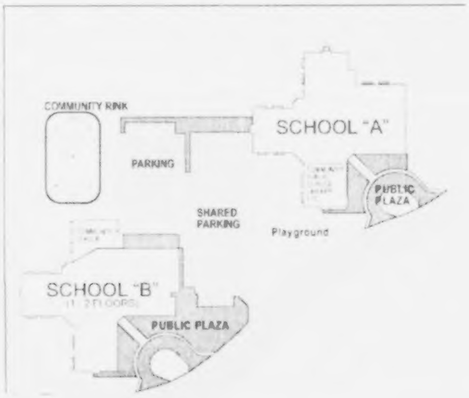
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4.0 IMPLEMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

There are several pillars that are critical to reaching the CKC Vision. These pillars include the *appropriate mix of partners, land use planning and design principles* linking the CKC to its service area and *appropriate consultation.*

CKC Partnerships:

A key challenge in the success of the CKC concept will be finding a relationship that not only produces benefits for the partners involved, but also sustains the changing needs of the users.

Some CKC partnerships might include a two-school campus. This **creates an opportunity to improve efficiency through cost reduction** if certain facilities are shared. For instance, while being physically connected and sharing some facilities (e.g., kitchen, mechanical plant and exterior athletic facilities) on the same land, it is possible for two schools to be run independently. This may mean a reduction in overall design and construction time, as well as staffing costs since there is less equipment and building space.

A local example of a school partnership is in the Twin Brooks neighbourhood in Edmonton, the George P. Nicholson Elementary School provides a local example of a 350 student elementary school with a gymnasium and library that shares space with a YMCA daycare and a Capital Health services clinic (see photo next column).

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While benefits can be attained through finding the right partnership mix, such relationships may result in an innovative way of administering such a facility. Another significant challenge is designing the structure to relate to the community, while allowing for the partners to maintain separate identities.

Land Use Planning and Design:

Land use planning and design principles are necessary to ensure appropriate placement and development of school/CKC sites in future communities. Examples of such principles are:

1. That the site be central to a cluster of neighbourhood or service areas.
2. That the site be highly accessible and viable while providing sufficient linkages throughout the community.
3. That the site configuration and design provide for safe circulation off/on the site and integrate the needs of potential users/partners (e.g. shared parking, lifelong learning).
4. That site locations allow for early servicing and availability.

Community Consultation:

Consultation is a key component in the creation of successful school/CKC sites. A "School/CKC Needs Assessment" is a proposed new requirement for new Area Structure Plans. This will identify projected school needs and scan the environment for potential partnership opportunities. This will assist in the timely and effective planning and development of these sites.

Opportunity for consultation should occur, both at the school/CKC formative stage and in its ongoing evolution as a focal point for lifelong learning.

Consultation participants may include:

- landowners;
- land developers;
- education providers;
- the City of Edmonton;
- the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues and appropriate community leagues;
- local adjacent community leagues;
- other potential education providers.

5.0 APPLICATION

Future school sites will continue to be assembled through the Municipal Reserve provisions of the Alberta Municipal Government Act. No changes are required to any municipal or provincial legislation, although the proposed strategy is flexible and can accommodate legislative changes. The Alberta Infrastructure sponsored "School Symposium" initiative, currently underway, may result in changes to enabling legislation and the delivery of educational services.

The future school sites strategy is designed for application in future Edmonton communities. However, this strategy also has potential application in the developed or developing parts of the city where there are vacant school sites and/or underutilized school buildings.

6.0 Outcomes

The school/CKC site strategy offers the following opportunities and challenges:

Affected Parties	Positive Outcomes	Negative Outcomes
Area Residents	Potential for development of a central school/CKC site that meets a wider range of resident needs (e.g. lifelong learning) in a timely manner and serves as a community focal point.	May be a challenge to develop school/CKC sites to provide appropriate access/linkage for all neighbourhood residents.
School Boards & Other Partners	Potential economies of scale — savings in capital (e.g. construction) and operating costs (e.g. staffing) through the sharing of common facilities (e.g. libraries, cafeterias, common areas, parking, playfields & other infrastructure). Potential for a superior visual and functional facility design that welcomes the community and has a positive impact on students, teachers and the surrounding neighbourhoods. Potential for CKC structures to make more efficient use of space and energy (e.g. two-floor design). Potential for combining planning and consultation efforts may not be necessary. Potential to apply this concept to previously built areas where a surplus of schools and vacant school sites exists.	May be a challenge to find the right partner relationships that, not only produce benefits for the partners involved,but also sustains the changing needs of theareas that are being served. Different ways of administering a multi-use facility (e.g. budgeting, scheduling, liability) and dealing with conflict and problem-solving will need to be determined. May be a challenge to design a CKC facility that will both maintain the identity of each partner and act as an identifiable focal point for the areas that are being served.
City of Edmonton (Council and Administration)	Potential to promote "community" as opposed to "individual" agency goals. Potential to plan and create a more comprehensive community focal point that enhances the long-term vitality, viability and stability of the adjacent neighbourhoods. Potential for acquisition of fewer future school sites in future communities and reduced negative situations associated with their future disposal and loss of tax base.	Designing adjacent neighbourhoods that will enhance the vitality, viability and accessibility of the CKC will be a challenge.
Land Developers	Potential to create a comprehensive focal point that enhances the attractiveness and marketability of adjacent neighbourhoods.	Additional efforts are required to design adjacent neighbourhoods that will enhance the vitality, viability and accessibility of the CKC.
Alberta Government	Potential for more effective and efficient use of public funds, and providing a wider range of educational services	CKC partnership concept demands funding mechanisms that recognizes and addresses

SmartChoices
for developing our community

INITIATIVE

Urban Design Framework for Edmonton

Cover Photo: City of Edmonton Planning and Development Department

1. INTRODUCTION

Every city is unique due to its character and personality. Great cities like Paris, London, Amsterdam or New York arouse feelings about their beauty, efficiency, or their romantic or business-like atmosphere. One thing common to these cities is that they are carefully planned, designed and crafted with a lot of emphasis on the "design of urban areas"; commonly referred to as "URBAN DESIGN".

BACKGROUND

Urban design is the art of arranging the external physical environment, referred to as public spaces or that which forms public spaces, to support human activities. The creation of these spaces is impacted by the many decisions that are made over time by both public and private sector players in the land use planning, architecture, engineering, investment and development fields.

In Edmonton, the City has taken a management role in shaping private sector decisions that influence the nature of urban design. It does this through the implementation of policies in documents such as the Municipal Development Plan, the Zoning Bylaw and specific area plans. In addition, the City plays a direct role when it undertakes its own land development and infrastructure projects.

City of Edmonton Planning and Development Department

Rice Howard Way, Edmonton

City of Edmonton Planning and Development Department

Champs-Elysees, Paris, France

To date, the City's direct and indirect involvement in influencing urban design has not included a comprehensive direction for high quality urban design. However, the Planning and Development Department is investigating options to establish a strategic approach to ensure that quality urban design is implemented with new land development and infrastructure projects. This process starts with the development of an Urban Design Framework. Staff are at the preliminary stages of this process and are currently establishing a terms of reference for developing the framework.

This scenario presents ideas about high quality urban design, and the value of pursuing the implementation of these ideas in Edmonton through an Urban Design Framework.

The main objective of the Urban Design Framework is to provide an efficient, enjoyable and vibrant environment for the people who live, work or visit that environment

SMART CHOICE BENEFITS

Quality urban design is about more than creating a visually appealing urban environment. It plays a fundamental role in planning for the urban and natural environment, creating environments that foster strong local business and contributing to the quality of life that can be enjoyed by Edmontonians.

Pursuing quality urban design through an Urban Design Framework is a smart choice because it will result in:

Options

- More variety of choice in the form, architectural design, and density of housing types available.
- More variety in the character and the amenities offered in residential neighbourhoods.
- Enhanced pedestrian environments that provide attractive alternatives to automobile use.

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Vitality

- More opportunities for diversity and visual stimulation in public spaces.
- Enhanced recognition of the natural and geographic environment and the importance of ensuring that changes are sustainable and ecologically responsible.

Viability

- Further development of Edmonton as an attractive physical environment will draw investment, tourism and business activity.

Access

- Opportunities for increased access to recreation and amenities that contribute to the quality of life enjoyed by Edmontonians.

2. DISCUSSION

Implementing quality urban design involves creating a vision for an area or a city and then deploying the skills and resources to realize that vision.

The goal is to improve the quality of the physical environment of the city through an informed understanding of the interactions among the social, economic, ecological, political, legal and aesthetic force found in cities

A strong focus on quality urban design will draw attention to the design process and challenge those involved to preserve, protect and create the best physical assets of a development. It will require thought about the details of a development including: the provision of high quality public and private spaces, weather protection, protection of views, provision of public art, and protection of heritage assets. It will lead to opportunities to use the character of the natural environment, and the creative energies of design professionals and affected communities to craft environments that result in comfort, beauty, and a strong sense of place.

City of Edmonton Planning and Development Department

Waterfront development, Portland, OR.

City of Edmonton Planning and Development Department

Marshall Square, San Francisco, CA.

Elements of Urban Design

The following points outline some of the benefits city residents experience where good quality urban design is a priority.

Preservation of the Natural Environment

The relationship between the built environment and the natural environment is a very important element of design. To provide maximum benefit to the public, the built environment - including buildings, roads, bridges, parks, plazas, waterfront areas, pedestrian areas, and bicycle trails – is designed to preserve nature, respect its ecology and enhance its beauty.

Visual Character

Prominent views to open space and urban areas are created, preserved and enhanced for public benefit. A continuing variety of stimulating visual experiences for both the pedestrian and the motorist add to the visual appeal of the community and the city.

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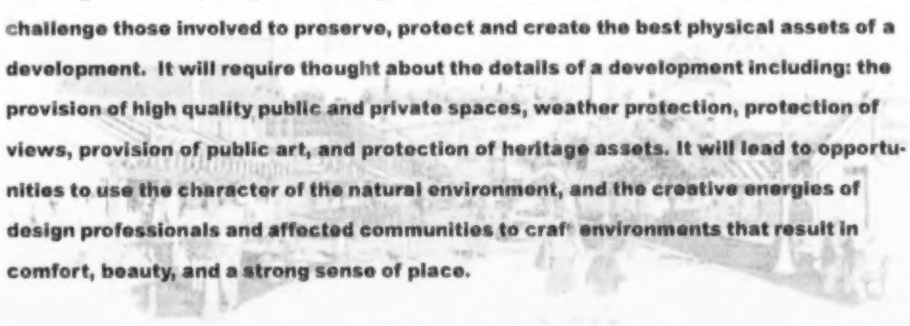

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City of Edmonton Planning and Development Department

Waterfront development, Portland, OR.

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Marshall Square, San Francisco, CA.

City of Edmonton Planning and Development Department

Residential above retail, Robson Street, Vancouver

City of Edmonton Planning and Development Department

Fairview Slopes, Vancouver

City of Edmonton Planning and Development Department

Pike Street Market, Seattle, USA

City of Edmonton Planning and Development Department

Steiner Street, San Francisco, USA

City of Edmonton Planning and Development Department

Old Strathcona, Edmonton

Mix of Land Uses

Mixing of residential, commercial, recreational and other land uses is a vital part of planning for pedestrian, transit, and vehicle access to these services. The close proximity of land uses make walking or cycling viable options

Pedestrian Scale Environments

A neighborhood where the basic street, block and lot configuration is easily walkable.

Active Streets and Public Spaces

Density and a concentration of mixed uses create active streets and public places and sustains businesses and other public services. People living and interacting in a densely developed area have public spaces and facilities that respond to their needs.

Well-Integrated Transportation System

The circulation system of public transit, private automobiles, bicycles and pedestrians is well integrated into the physical design of neighborhoods and the city as a whole. An efficient, comfortable and safe circulation system adds to the visual character of the street and the beauty of the city.

Preservation of Desirable Neighbourhood Character

The desirable qualities of exiting areas are preserved through the growth and change process. Inner city neighbourhoods are redeveloped in a manner consistent with the established character of the area. Development in new areas continues to establish the city character.

Established Sense of Place

A sense of place is created in urban spaces that are clearly defined, and where thought has been put to developing each space with a unique character that reflects specifics of the site. Special lighting, decorative treatments and specific programming of activities (i.e. special carnivals, special events, festivals and parades) can further contribute to a strong sense of place.

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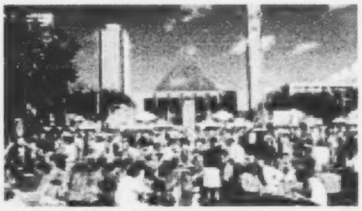
Stephen Avenue Mall, Calgary

Appropriate Relationships of Built Form to the Surrounding Context

Architecture and its built form have a sensitive relationship with the surrounding context. This relationship may be one of continuity or contrast with respect to scale, form, massing, style, materials and color. A historically preserved area may portray a certain architectural character and context that is respected by surrounding developments.



City of Edmonton Planning and Development Department

Churchill Square, Edmonton

Government and Civic Design is Featured

Civic and other government buildings are prominently treated and located in the community. Public open space, parks and plazas generally accompany these buildings. These features enhance sites, influence the character of surrounding areas, and add to the beauty of the city.

3. FIT

The development of a comprehensive framework for urban design in Edmonton is a movement forward from the City's current approach to influencing urban design. However, the application of good quality urban design outside of a formal framework is certainly not foreign to Edmonton.

The City has a history of incorporating urban design at policy, plan and implementation levels. Some of the projects that have incorporated a significant consideration of good urban design are:

- the Capital City Downtown Plan
- the inner city area redevelopment plans for Oliver, Old Stathcona, Central McDougal, Riverdale, Rossdale and Cloverdale
- Heritage Trail
- Victoria Trail
- Millwoods Neighbourhood Plan and its Town Centre
- Heritage Valley Servicing Concept Design Brief

Street enhancement projects with a specific theme or ambience, such as Rice Howard Way, 104 Street Promenade, Chinatown (97 Street), Little Italy (95 Street), 107 Avenue Improvements, Whyte Avenue, Beverly Improvements, French Quarter, Louise McKinney Park, Gateway Boulevard and design of the Ellerslie Road overpass.

4. IMPLEMENTATION

In order for an Urban Design Framework to be implemented, the following actions are necessary.

Definition of Edmonton's Existing Urban Design Features

The Strategic Areas Services Division of the Planning and Development Department has prepared a background paper that helps to define the significant features that define Edmonton's current urban environment.

Preparation and Approval of a Project Terms of Reference

The Strategic Areas Services Division of the Planning and Development Department are currently developing a terms of reference that will establish the work program and resourcing required to proceed with developing the Urban Design Framework. City Council will be requested to approve the Terms of Reference.

Development of an Urban Design Vision for Edmonton

The Project Terms of Reference will include the development of a Vision for quality Urban Design in Edmonton and review of current policies and implementation approaches to inform future direction.

Development of New Policy and Implementation Approaches

It is anticipated that the Framework will create opportunities and innovative solutions that go beyond control and regulations.

Enhance Partnerships

Implementation of the Framework will involve a significant role for both the private and public sector. In building partnerships, the importance of urban design is fundamental to problem solving, good business and social policy.

5. APPLICATION

A preliminary analysis of Edmonton's urban environment suggests that the implementation of an Urban Design Framework could aim to strengthen the following areas:

City of Edmonton Planning and Development Department
Highway 2 Overpass, Edmonton

1. MAJOR ENTRANCE CORRIDORS

The visual image of entrance corridors is important because they give people their first impressions upon entry into Edmonton, and lasting impressions as they leave. Entry points could be up-graded to provide the best visual impression and image.

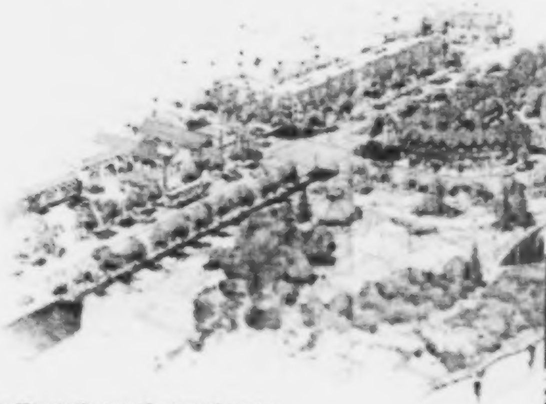
City of Edmonton Planning and Development Department
Victoria Promenade, Edmonton

2. PROTECTING VIEWS AND VISTAS

The views from and into the various unique areas of Edmonton are major assets that could be protected and enhanced in order for people to experience them and remember the city by those visual experiences.

3. ENHANCING RIVER VALLEY

The River Valley is one of Edmonton's biggest assets. The City could explore further opportunities to preserve and enhance the use of the River Valley and its natural areas as well as the beautiful views of the city from and into the River Valley.


City of Edmonton Planning and Development Department
River Valley community, Edmonton

City of Edmonton Planning and Development Department
Old Strathcona, Edmonton

City of Edmonton Planning and Development Department
Jasper East Village, Edmonton

4. PRESERVING HERITAGE

A vibrant city preserves and enhances its history, arts and architecture for visitors and residents to enjoy. The City of Edmonton has many significant buildings of historic and architectural importance. Many are preserved through the City's Historic Resource Management Program.

City of Edmonton Planning and Development Department

Chinatown, Edmonton

5. STRENGTHENING PUBLIC GATHERING SPACES

Public gathering spaces are assets of a vibrant city when they are well designed and programmed. Our City has many public gathering spaces including Churchill Square and Old Strathcona. There are many other activity nodes in the city that also have the potential to be vibrant, active areas including Chinatown, Little Italy, Beverly and 124 Street. The City could explore further opportunities to strengthen these activity nodes as well as those that are emerging.

City of Edmonton Planning and Development Department

Skyreach Centre, Edmonton

6. ENHANCING SPORT FACILITIES

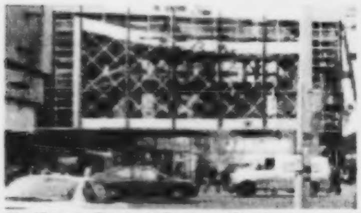
Sports are part of the Edmonton's economy, as well as an essential part of city culture. Facilities such as the Stadium, the Sky Reach Coliseum and the Exhibition Grounds and their surrounding areas could be further enhanced.

City of Edmonton Planning and Development Department

South Edmonton Common, Edmonton

7. ADDRESSING BIG BOX DEVELOPMENT

Big box development has major impacts on established shopping centres, City infrastructure (roadways and utilities), adjacent neighbourhoods and downtown. Urban design concerns related to transportation, site planning, landscaping, architectural quality and signage could be pursued with greater priority at the early planning stage of the process.



City of Edmonton Planning and Development Department

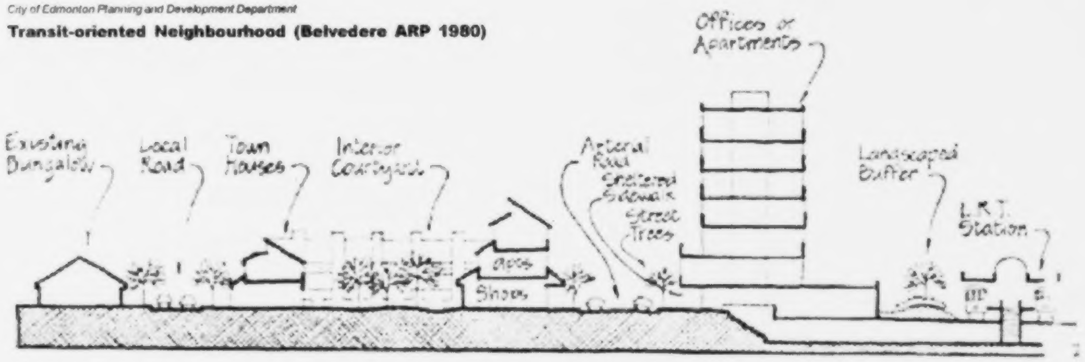
City Centre Pedway, Edmonton

8. IMPROVING DOWNTOWN PEDWAY NETWORK

The Downtown Pedway network is an excellent asset for Edmonton considering the city experiences extreme winter conditions for a number of months of the year. The pedways have excellent signage and are well integrated with various mixed use complexes, parkades and LRT stations. The City could expand the pedway network as development opportunities arise to ensure well connected downtown.

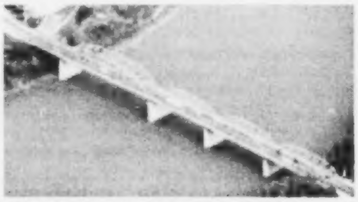
City of Edmonton Planning and Development Department

Transit-oriented Neighbourhood (Belvedere ARP 1980)



9. SUPPORTING TRANSIT THROUGH DESIGN

A transit system that is well integrated with land use planning can contribute to the city's livability. Higher density development around major transit corridors, transit nodes and stops, provides convenient access to the system for a large number of people. The City could take a proactive role in developing future neighbourhoods that are transit supportive. In areas like the inner city and downtown, the City could re-examine transit corridors and major transit/LRT stations where it might be feasible to provide integrated mixed uses, including higher residential density.



City of Edmonton Planning and Development Department

Dawson Bridge, Edmonton

10. DESIGNING BEAUTIFUL BRIDGES

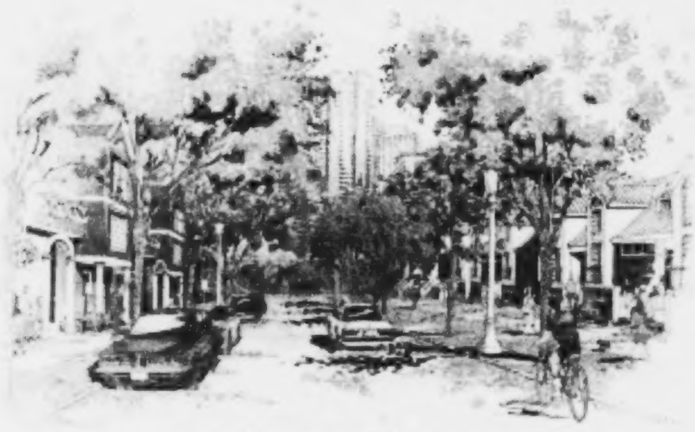
Bridges are essential transportation connectors and landscape enhancers. They represent major landmarks of history and bridge technology from the past. Older bridges in the River Valley could be preserved and enhanced. New bridges could be designed as future landmarks that add to the beauty of the city and its landscape.

City of Edmonton Planning and Development Department

Freeway, Edmonton

11. LANDSCAPING FREEWAYS

Freeways within the city are essential infrastructure for the movement of people, goods and services. It is equally important that this infrastructure does not negatively affect adjacent neighborhoods, and that it blends in visually with the cityscape. Freeway corridors could be landscaped more extensively and the design of entry and exit points could be better integrated with the neighbourhoods. The Yellowhead corridor would benefit from significant enhancement.



City of Edmonton Planning and Development Department

Artist's rendition of Rossdale, Edmonton

13. PRESERVING AND ENHANCING INNER CITY NEIGHBOURHOODS

Inner city areas reflect the history of development of the city. With more demand for suburban type residential development, many inner city neighborhoods have been neglected. While it makes good planning sense to protect mature neighborhoods, the City must also strive to accommodate market needs and pressures for inner city residential infill development. The City could develop criteria for development in mature neighborhoods to allow infill that responds to the neighborhood character and the local community's needs.

City of Edmonton Planning and Development Department

Terwillegar Town, Edmonton

14. DIRECTING LIVABLE SUBURBAN GROWTH

Suburban development continues to dominate the lifestyles of many Edmontonians. Public and private partners could aim to address livability and energy issues in the development of new suburban neighborhoods. Denser, more compact urban areas are generally more livable than sprawling suburban areas. The enjoyment of public space is an important social priority. Well designed areas have a feeling of liveliness and energy; they are interesting and safer places to walk around. This sets the stage for face-to-face interaction, and the establishment of a sense of community and place.

City of Edmonton Planning and Development Department

Industrial Development, Edmonton

15. MITIGATING IMPACTS OF MAJOR INDUSTRIAL AREAS

Some heavy industry can create environmental pollution or other unsightly visual conditions. An urban design framework could be established to mitigate some of the visual effects. Environmental planning and urban design guidelines could make the industrial site less visually intrusive and more environmentally responsive.

6. OUTCOMES

Urban design policy, plans and implementation will result in both positive and negative outcomes.

Affected Parties	Positive Outcomes	Negative Outcomes
The City	• Enhanced economic base • Potential increase in revenues	Additional staff and budget required to • create design review process and implementation criteria • upgrade city design and performance standards • develop design guidelines and amendments to Zoning and Maintenance Bylaws • develop and maintain public areas
Developer/Applicant	• Better design framework - a confidence builder • Potential for higher rate of return from better development	• Intensive development approval process (more rules for design review and approval) • Potentially requiring more time, effort and money for projects
Community	• An attractive city offering enhanced livability and quality of life • Interesting streetscapes, art, and architecture, diversity and visual stimulation • Beautiful and functional city with attractive parks, well designed and programmed public open spaces and preserved views • Preserved heritage buildings and streetscapes • Improved public services and facilities • Enhanced streetscapes and transportation corridors • More transit oriented mixed use developments and vital streets • Enhanced freeways and well designed bridges • Well designed and integrated inner city and suburban neighbourhoods • Enhanced public amenities and facilities • More mixing of uses and public spaces • Integrated university, college and school campuses and other community facilities/services • Increased sense of community • Integrated, sustainable built environments • A safer city	• Potential higher taxes for improved public environments, services and facilities • Potential increase in cost of housing as developers attempts to pass on cost to consumers • Higher cost of living due to excessive attractiveness of the city

APPENDIX II: ORIGINAL SMART CHOICE IDEAS

The nine smart choices ideas examined in this catalogue were derived from the following list, compiled by the Smart Choices Participation Committee.

ORIGINAL SMART CHOICE IDEAS

Transit Oriented Mixed Use Development

Develop options that encourage transit oriented mixed use development along existing and proposed Light Rail Transit (LRT) corridors, major bus routes and major transit centres, while identifying current barriers to development.

Small Scale Infill

Explore options to encourage sensitive small scale infill or new development.

Neighbourhood Reinvestment

Explore options for investing in areas where income levels and social conditions challenge reinvestment in the neighbourhood. Reinvestment should benefit rather than displace residents.

Redevelopment Process

Develop a process for proponent and community involvement in redevelopment projects affecting over .5 hectares or involving 40 or more units.

Multi Use Trail Corridor and Mixed Use

Explore mixed use development opportunities tied to fast tracking the Multi Use Trail Corridor development.

Walkable City

Explore the outcomes associated with Edmonton becoming a walkable city with pedestrian friendly neighbourhoods and walkable geographic areas.

Consultation Process

Explore mechanisms for structuring consultation on development proposals, including elements such as the consultation structure, determination of timelines, identification of "the community", the review of applications and the education of citizens.

Commercial and Light Industrial

Investigate options for revitalizing commercial and industrial uses on arterial roads to enhance their utilization and attractiveness.

Economic Activity Centres

Examine the capacities for and opportunity to intensify activity in economic activity centres and major nodes.

City Owned Land Intensification

Evaluate City owned land for potential intensified use, working with the character of neighbouring properties and market demand.

Housing for Mature Market

Explore options for integrating housing for the mature market into existing neighbourhoods at a variety of scales with access to public and private amenities.

Model for Developed School Sites

Explore the elements of a model for a City approach to deal with developed school sites that are no longer required for school purposes.

Financial Infrastructure Strategy

Smart Debt, incurred to support intensification of the city will increase the character of the city while improving efficiency in our use of resources.

Industrial Land

Explore opportunities for intensified use of industrial land.

Culturally Interesting and Innovative City

Our city will support innovation, aesthetic difference, cultural diversity, and creativity in urban design, fostering a city of diversity and interesting urban form.

Urban Design Framework

An urban design framework will provide a structure and set of guidelines within which the design/development community can create innovative, interesting, character developments.

Temporary Use of Vacant Property

The City will foster temporary use of vacant city property for community activities such as community gardens. This will improve efficiency in the use of land and increase the sense of community.

Impacts of Aging: Research

Explore the impact of an aging population on housing demands and commercial needs. Opportunities for innovative and useful urban intensification in response to market needs are anticipated from such activity.

Echo Boom Market

The echo boom market, while smaller than the baby boomers, represents a large new market with tastes and interests very different than the urban markets preceding it. Understanding and responding to this market with creative urban solutions will result in urban "smart choices".

Proactive Planning on a Larger Scale

The City will provide proactive district planning at the city-wide scale, identifying strategic areas for intensification and creative design projects, stimulating interest through incentives, and adjusting corporate planning and Plan Edmonton to accommodate this innovation.

Growth Linkages

Link approvals for new development in suburban areas with a requirement to invest in targeted revitalization of older areas of the City.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

The following terms are defined to assist in the interpretation of the Smart Choice Ideas and do not replace legal definitions set out in other sources.

Accessibility
Ease of access.

Amenity Area
An indoor or outdoor area, publicly or privately owned, provided for active or passive recreation and enjoyment.

Area Redevelopment Plan
A statutory plan that is primarily applied to mature areas and may designate an area for the purpose of preservation or improvement of land and buildings; rehabilitation of buildings; removal of buildings and/or their construction and replacement; or, the relocation and rehabilitation of utilities and services.

Area Structure Plan
A statutory plan that identifies where residential, commercial, institutional and recreational sites will be located and how essential municipal services such as water and sewer systems, roads and fire protection will be provided. These plans also describe the number of people that are expected to live in the new area and how development will be staged over time.

Big Box Retail
Large warehouse-style stores, often specializing in a specific retail category, many with upwards of 9,000 square metres of floor space and large parking lots.

Brownfields
Land that has had contamination from a previous use. Contamination can be caused by industrial facilities, utility substations, paint shops or leaky tanks at gas stations. Site restoration is necessary before redevelopment.

Business Revitalization Zone
A self-help mechanism by which a group of business people, in a specific area, administer funds, collected through a special business tax, to improve the area and jointly promote their businesses. Business revitalization zones are established by municipal bylaws under the authority of the Municipal Government Act.

Cash-in-lieu of Parking
An arrangement that allows the Development Approving Authority to require a developer to contribute to the cost of constructing off-street parking facilities in lieu of providing all the required parking on the development site. Revenues provided through this arrangement are usually set aside in a fund allocated for the construction of parking facilities within a defined area.

Density
The number of dwelling units, square meters of floor space, or people per acre or hectare.

Edmonton Capital Region
The Edmonton Census Metropolitan Area, as defined by Statistics Canada based on the high degree of economic and social interaction and integration.

Floor Area Ratio
The numerical value of the floor area of a building or structure relative to the size of the site upon which it is located.

Greenfield Development
Development of lands that have not previously been used for urban development purposes. These lands are generally located at the edge of a city's built up area.

Infill Development
Development in the existing areas of a city, occurring on vacant or under-utilized lands, or behind or between existing development.

Infrastructure (Municipal)
The services and facilities in which Edmonton has capital investment and maintenance responsibilities, including roadways, sidewalks, bridges, street lights and traffic signals, transit buses, light rail transit facilities, solid waste management systems, potable water distribution systems, storm sewers, sanitary sewers, sports fields, playgrounds, arenas, pools, police and emergency response stations, civic buildings, parks and boulevard trees.

Land Use Designation (Zoning)
Legal control of the use and intensity of development on a parcel of land.

Modal Split
The proportion of travel by various modes including car, transit, walking or cycling. It can be qualified by time of day or location.

Municipal Development Plan
A statutory plan which guides the future growth and development of a municipality as it relates to transportation, housing, economic activities, recreation, the environment, social issues and other matters.

Municipal Government Act (MGA)
The primary provincial legislation that municipalities are governed by. The MGA sets out the legislated roles and responsibilities of municipalities and municipal officials.

Open Space
All land and water areas, either publicly owned or offering public access.

Overlay
Additional development regulations superimposed on specific areas of the Zoning Map, which supersede or add to the development regulations of the underlying Zone.

Pedestrian Oriented or Pedestrian Friendly
An environment designed to make travel on foot convenient, attractive and comfortable for various ages and abilities. Considerations include the directness of the route, safety, amount of street activity, separation of pedestrian and auto circulation, street furniture, surface material, sidewalk width, prevailing wind direction, intersection treatment, curb cuts, ramps and landscaping.

Plan Edmonton
Edmonton's Municipal Development Plan (see above definition for Municipal Development Plan).

Public Space
Space on public or private property within an establishment or outside of an establishment, which is open to the public.

Reserve Land
Lands acquired at the time of subdivision for park and/or school purposes. Such lands are dedicated in accordance with the *Municipal Government Act* 1995.

Required Yard
The area of a lot required to be unoccupied by any portion of a building or structure.

Rezoning
The process of amending the Zoning Bylaw to legally change how a parcel of land may be used and developed.

Servicing Concept Design Brief
A non-statutory plan adopted by Council resolution, which provides a generalized framework for municipal infrastructure and servicing, planning and development guidelines and basic environmental requirements to facilitate the staged submission of neighbourhood plans.

Statutory Plan
A plan adopted by municipal bylaw under the authority of the *Municipal Government Act* 1995. Examples of a statutory plan are: an intermunicipal development plan, municipal development plan, area structure plans and area redevelopment plans.

Streetscape
All the elements that make up the physical environment of a street and define its character including the road, boulevard, sidewalk, building setback, height and style. It also includes pavement treatments, trees, lighting, pedestrian amenities and street furniture.

Suburban Areas
In Edmonton, suburban areas are generally those neighbourhoods developed since 1970, lands currently approved for urban development, and other lands identified as suitable for future residential development in Plan Edmonton.

Traffic Calming
The elements of a streetscape that are designed to slow the speed of drivers.

Transit Oriented, Transit Friendly, or Transit Supportive
The elements of urban form and design that make transit more accessible and efficient. These range from land use elements (e.g. locating higher density housing and commercial uses along transit routes and close to Light Rail Transit Stations) to design (e.g. provision of direct routes to transit facilities). It also encompasses pedestrian-friendly features as most transit riders begin and end their trips as pedestrians.

Travel Mode
Travel methods such as car use, public transit, cycling or walking.

Utilities
Facilities for gas, electricity, telephone, cable television, water, storm and sanitary sewer.

Zoning Bylaw
The bylaw that divides the city into land use zones and establishes procedures for processing and deciding upon development applications. It sets out rules that affect how each parcel of land in the city may be used and developed. It also includes a zoning map.

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City of Vancouver
City of Eugene
City of Denver
City of Calgary
City of Halifax – Harbor Development Corporation
City of Charlotte
City of Saskatoon
City of Seattle

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